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Industry tribute paid inside to internationally renowned artist

Comics International

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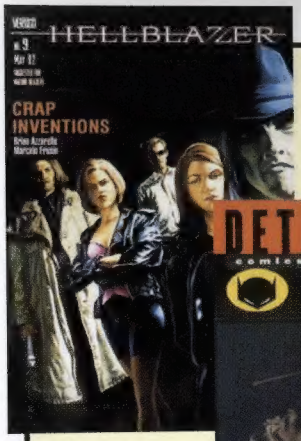

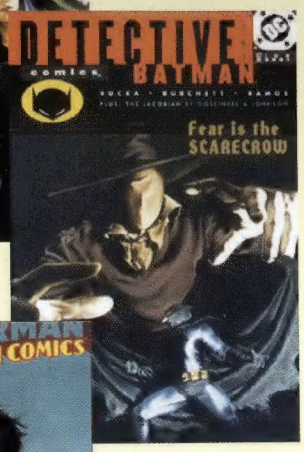

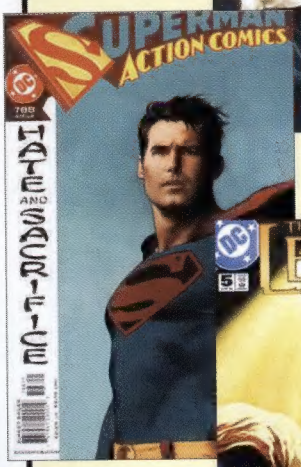

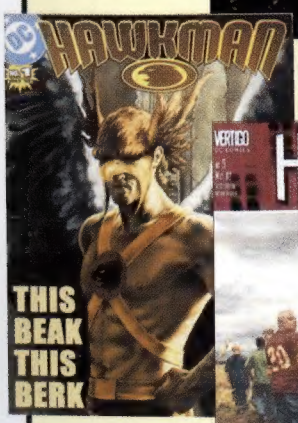

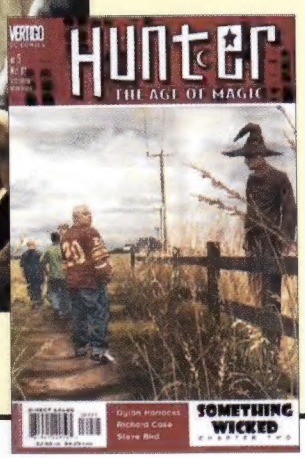

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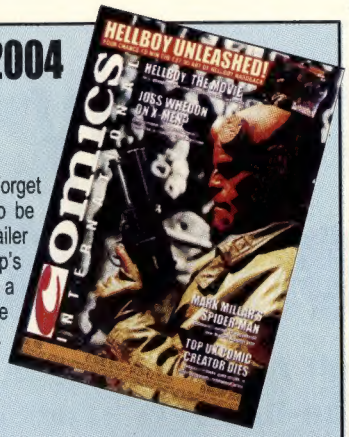

Inside this issue

COVER: Let's go out on a limb here. Forget Daredevil and Hulk, this one's going to be massive. Up there with X-Men. The trailer looks fantastic, the FX and the make-up's to die for. Hellboy is about to become a household name, and you read it here first. Gen up with our feature on page 12.

News

NEWS INTERNATIONAL: DC nails down deal with European publisher... Marvel Knights gains **Incredible Hulk** and **Spider-Man**... British adventurer makes his US debut... Mike Mignola lines up **Hellboy** spin-offs... ComicsOne adds street racing manhua... New Marvel Age dawns with push from Stan Lee and Steve Ditko... British indie embraces multi-media... Archie heroine gets manga makeover... Checker keeps pioneer's rarities coming... **El Zombo** debuts at Dark Horse... **Monolith** invades DC's New York while WildStorm stands by to relaunch **21 Down**... Vertigo opens its **Bite Club**... plus much more **4**

TRIBUTE: Don Lawrence was probably the last of a generation of outstanding UK comics artists. In addition to Alan Woollcombe's obituary for the man behind Storm, Trigan Empire, Karl the Viking and much more, his ex-apprentices Liam Sharp and Chris Weston pay tribute to their mentor. **22**

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Sez Dez

Editorial
Dez Skinn

BACK when they were all the rage, one friend of mine kept all of his work contact details in his Filofax. The problem was that he kept losing it and had a devil of a job getting in touch with anybody.

Me, I've been using the same address book since I started in the industry, way back in the heyday of IPC's weekly comics.

One kindly (or bored) assistant once bought me a nice clean new book and set out copying my dogeared little blue book's entries – which had at least three layers of tape holding together covers and loose pages. But the snag arose when she asked me to check through the entries for the completed letter A. I spent the best part of a day calling people I hadn't spoken to for years. It's a sad reality that when you're no longer working with somebody you easily lose touch.

So, to this day, I've stuck with my now five tape-layered tome, scoffing at the thought of any electronic equivalent.

But here's the kicker of using the same address book across more than three decades; friends die. And I just can't bring myself to cross through their names. Frank Bellamy, Eric Bradbury, Ron Embleton, Jack Kirby, Brian Lewis, Don Martin, Ken Reid, the list goes on.

Sadly, another has been added this month, Don Lawrence. Underappreciated in his own country, unknown in the States, Don was a legend in mainland Europe with queues for his autograph at functions outstripping top US creators.

It's better left to ex-assistants Liam Sharp and Chris Weston to offer tributes to his greatness. I'll simply say that if I have my way, the English-speaking comics world will become more aware of his talent, and appreciate the loss it has suffered.

In the meantime, let's give Don the last word, courtesy of a 1975 Hunt Emerson Lucca festival cartoon...

'EY GOP! ANY O' YOU LOT GORRA LIGHT?
...IM OLDER THAN YOU GUYS, BUT I'M AS HIP AS YOU ARE AND I'M AS PASSIONATE ABOUT COMIX AND...
CRICKET!
=THE DEBONAIR DEZ SKINN, THE INTENSE DAVE PASCAL AND THE LEATHERY DON LAWRENCE INVOLVED IN A HEATED DISCUSSION ON - WHAT ELSE? -COMIX WHICH WENT ON UNTIL 6.30am ...LIKE I SAID, THE BARS NEVER CLOSE...

Get ready for the event of 2004..!

Vault Auctions will be going live with it's on-line sale in early February 2004.

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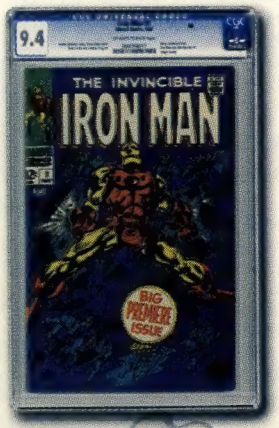

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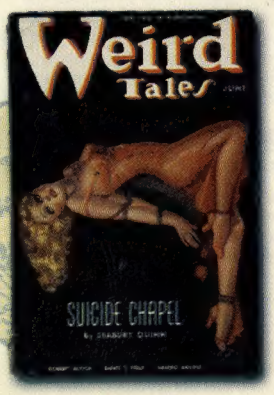

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DC acquires US rights to European graphic novels

Above: The cover to ***The Metabarons*** *trade paperback volume 1 [2001]; art by Juan Gimenez.*

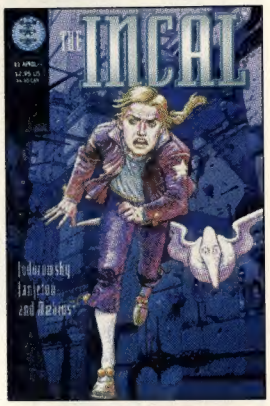
Acclaimed international creators gain greater English-language exposure through American superhero publisher

IN ITS constant search for innovative ways to expand the market for comics in the US, DC has formed an alliance with one of Europe's foremost publishers of avant-garde graphic novels.

The deal, which will bring greater exposure to such stars of the European comics scene as Moebius, Enki Bilal, and Alejandro Jodorowsky, requires Humanoids Publishing – the Los Angeles-based subsidiary of Les Humanoïdes Associés – to produce 36 books a year for the DC catalogue. Included will be not only English-language editions of titles from the French parent company, but also specially commissioned work by American creators.

I am Legion

Among the fan favourites already developing projects for Humanoids are Kurt Busiek, whose **Redhand** is drawn by Mario (**Morgana**) Alberti, and Geoff Johns and Butch Guice, who are working on **Olympus** with **The Possessed** co-writer Kris Grimminger. Also in the pipeline are **Sebastian X** by **Le Jour des Magiciens** writer Michelangelo La Neve and Stuart Immonen, John Cassaday's **I am Legion** and **Dreamshifters**, written by Jodorowsky and drawn by Travis Charest.



Above: The cover to 2001's ***The Incal*** *#1 art by José Ladronn.*

No decision has yet been made as to whether DC is to release its Humanoids titles in the standard European album format or to rework the material to the more comic shop friendly US comicbook size.

Metal Hurlant

In addition, although the first titles under the deal are scheduled for July, no announcement has been made as to what they will be.

Further, there is no word on the fate of **Metal Hurlant**. Launched in 2002 by Humanoids, this US version of the famed French comics title – has been blighted by poor sales since its first issue *[see below]*.

Superhero prejudice daunts Humanoids

ESTABLISHED by Les Humanoïdes Associés in 1999 to be its US arm, Humanoids Publishing has struggled from the beginning to overcome the direct market's peculiar aversion to non-superhero comics.

Its problems are probably best summed up with two examples.

In 2002 it premiered **Metal Hurlant**, its English-language revamp of the acclaimed French comics magazine and forerunner to **Heavy Metal** – founded by Jean-Pierre Dionnet, Philippe Druillet, Moebius and others in 1974. Despite publicity generated by the inclusion of a strip written by then-**Avengers** writer Kurt Busiek, with sales of less than 3,500, the first issue of the anthology failed to enter Diamond's Top 200.

The bimonthly is now believed to be selling under 2,500 per issue.

December 32nd

Reportedly Enki Bilal's sequel to his **Dormant Beast** graphic novel sold in excess of 400,000 copies in France alone.

That really throws into focus the poor performance of **December 32nd** *[see cover right]* when it was solicited by last July. So low were sales of the $15.95 hardcover that Humanoids was forced to cancel publication planning to resolicit it at a later date.

News of the cancellation came shortly before the announcement of the alliance with DC. It can only be hoped that the title would do better being re-offered through the higher profile company, which has greater bookstore penetration than Humanoids can ever hope to achieve on its own.

The co-publishing deal should benefit not just both parties, but the comics industry as a whole.

Ultimates writer spearheads changes as Marvel Knights gains fresh blood

***Incredible Hulk** exits Marvel Universe as Mark Millar prepares to launch **Spider-Man** monthly*

MK0404 is the code name for an April expansion of the Marvel Knights line with at least four more monthlies joining **Daredevil**, **Captain America** and **4**, the new Fantastic Four comic which launches on February 11.

"We're strengthening the Marvel Knights line by importing three monthly titles – possibly four – from the Marvel Universe, and starting the new **Spider-Man** series by Mark Millar and Terry Dodson in April as well," explained editor Axel Alonso.

Superhero battles

"The books that we're pulling over stand apart from the rest and appeal to a Marvel Knights reader," added Alonso, who said he believed that reader is probably not somebody who lies awake in the middle of the night wondering whether Hulk or Thor is stronger.

"In direct contradiction to this premise though," he continued, "we're going to have lots of superhero battles in the three books as soon as we bring them over. Each of these series is going to not only start a new arc when it comes to the line, but we'll also be double-shipping the three titles for that month as well."

Weird science

Refusing to be drawn on the other titles being transferred, the editor said **Incredible Hulk**, is to join the MK line with #70. "It's the beginning of a new arc and it will be our first big superhero brawl since Bruce [Jones, writer] came on the series – we're bringing in Iron Man for the story.

"We reasoned that the Hulk universe is big enough to include cyberpunk, and Iron Man fits that picture," he explained. "**Hulk** has a weird science backdrop to start with, and Tony Stark is a guy who wears a super-computer hooked up to an arsenal, so we reasoned that it made sense.

"Bruce Banner and Tony Stark, we reasoned, are two sides of the same coin – they both have a little bit of Bill Gates in them, but where Banner skews in the direction of Steve Buscemi, Tony Stark is Brad Pitt. Bruce [Jones] reasoned that there's a lot he can say about that, so that it's not all about the fight – it's about the men just as much, if not more."

*Pictured: Cover art for **Daredevil** #59 [above] by Alex Maleev; the first issue of Marvel Knights **Spider-Man** monthly [top] by Terry and Rachel Dodson and **Incredible Hulk** #71 [left] – the second Marvel Knights issue of the title – by Mike Deodato Jr.*

Harder and grittier

Marvel Knights' **Spider-Man** is a title which reunites Mark **(Ultimates)** Millar with artists Terry and Rachel Dodson, who worked with him on **Trouble**.

Asked how it would differ from the existing Spider-Man comics, Alonso replied, "**Amazing Spider-Man** is the flagship title and Joe Straczynski works hard to carefully craft a book that sits firmly in the Marvel Universe. Its sister title, **Spectacular Spider-Man**, is skewed to appeal to longtime fans and younger readers. Mark and Terry's upcoming series is for the uninitiated – it's like an amusement park ride: You strap yourself in and scream all the way. And while it's not a MAX title, it's harder and grittier than perhaps any Spider-Man title to date."

Pursuing the point, Millar said, "My take on Spider-Man needs a certain level of realism. I'll stress immediately that nobody wanted this to be a MAX book because I'd have hated to see the character in an environment like that. I wanted this book to have a certain level of sophistication, both in ideas and storytelling. There isn't going to be any kind of excessive swearing or gratuitous sexuality. Yes, there'll be an edginess to the action and the situations as we explore the slightly darker parts of the Marvel Universe but my nephew has Spider-Man on his underwear, for God's sake, and I don't want to produce a book that's going to damage the character.

"This couldn't really be done in the regular Marvel Universe because, historically, those books are aimed at a more general audience. The Knights imprint allows me to think in terms of a smart teen market and older, as opposed to anything crude or crass," concluded Millar, who said the title would be 100% in continuity.

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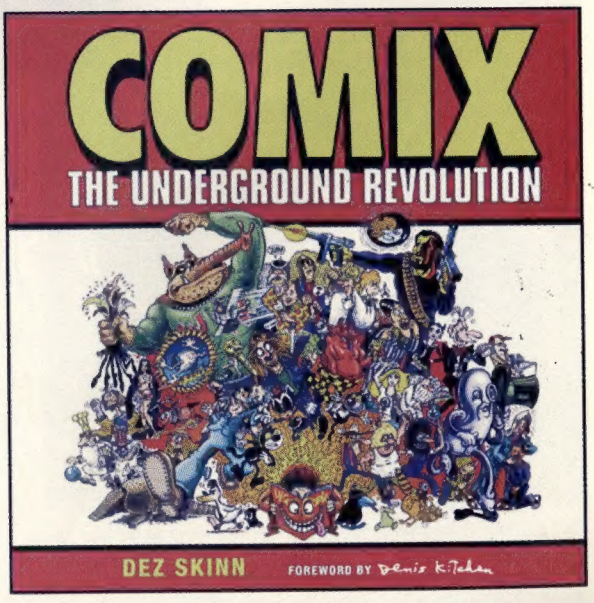


THESE ARE NOT YOUR CHILDREN'S COMICS!

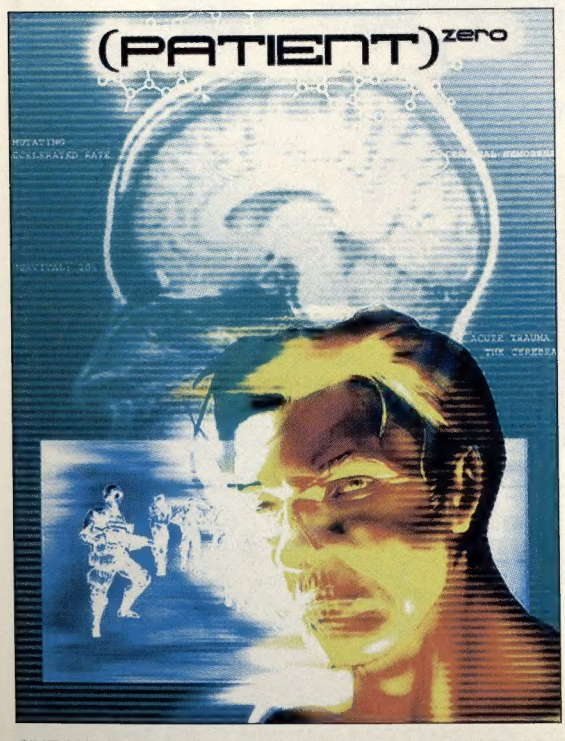
Mignola returns to Hellboy's Bureau

WITH his involvement in the Guillermo del Torro-directed *Hellboy* movie all-but at an end, Mike Mignola is once again turning his attention to comics and in particular to stories set in the milieu of his demonic paranormal investigator.

After writing and drawing *Dr Carp's Experiment – A Hellboy Adventure* for 2003's **The Dark Horse Book of Hauntings**, Mignola is delving back into the past for the first in a series of B.P.R.D. miniseries he is to script for others to illustrate.

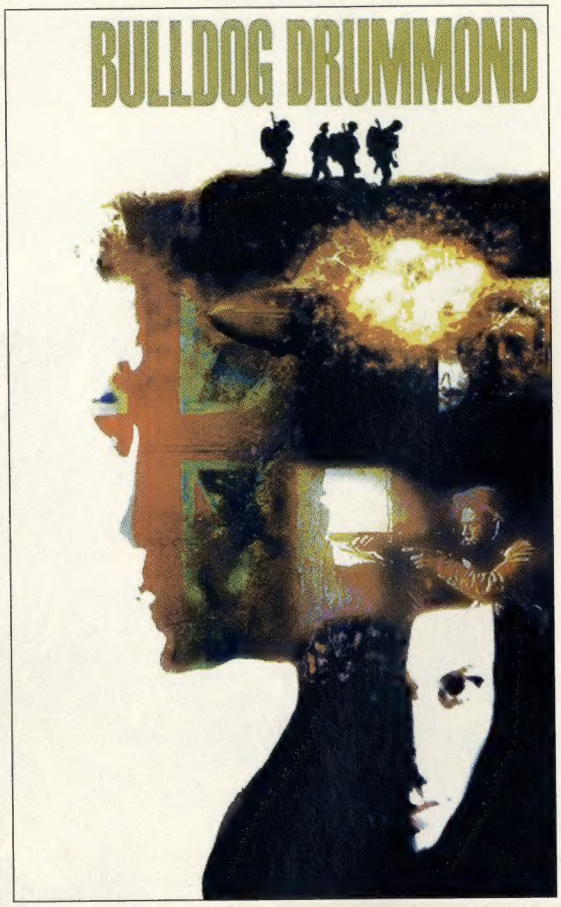
With art by **Sandman Mystery Theatre**'s Guy Davis, **A Plague of Frogs** is a five-parter in which the members of the Bureau of Paranormal Research and Defense tackle the frog-men they faced 10 years ago in **Seed of Destruction**, the first [1994] **Hellboy** mini.

***B.P.R.D.: A Plague of Frogs** #1, priced $2.99, ships March 3.*



*ONE MAN'S obsession with artificial intelligence and his fear that computers will take over the world is the background to newcomer John McLewan-Foreman's futuristic **Patient Zero**. Drawn by Engine Press's **Killing Demons** artist Brent White, the Image four-parter focuses on Alex Grant, one of a handful of imperfectly mutated psychics who wage Samuel Deighton's war against AIs on his behalf. Priced $2.95, the first issue ships on March 24.*

US resurrects Britain's two-fisted adventurer



*Above: The cover to **Moonstone Noir: Bulldog Drummond**; art by Brett Barkley. Priced $4.95, the 48-page oneshot ships in May.*

IN A somewhat risky move Moonstone is to introduce a British hero to an American comics audience.

Created by H C (Sapper) McNeile for the 1920 novel that bears his name, Bulldog Drummond appeared in nine other books and became a star of theatre, cinema, radio and TV. An old-fashioned patriot, the ex-army captain also appeared in a number of Amalgamated Press/Fleetway's **Super-Detective Picture Library** – which ran 188 issues from 1953 to 1960 – but has not made it into a US comic until now.

Illustrated in grey tones by Brett Barkley, who worked on Blue Line Pro's **How to Break-In to the Comic Book Business**, the 48-page **Bulldog Drummond** is written by **Wonder Woman**'s William Messner-Loebs, who describes the uniquely British hero as massive, savage and violent

The writer also told **CI** the story is set in 1920. "A universal acid – the ultimate weapon – has been developed and every spy, bureaucrat and anarchist is after it. Hugh 'Bulldog' Drummond and his little band of ex-soldiers race to keep the formula and stop the war."

Top Speed for US

AN EXTINCT comics subgenre is being resurrected with the English-language version of a manhua [Hong Kong comic] based around the after hours street racing craze.

Like the hot rod and drag racing titles published in the 1950s and '60s, the 200-page **Top Speed** focuses on young drivers and their need to show off their cars... and their girls. A look into the world of underground street racing, the ComicsOne title was created by George Lau, Man Wai Cheung and Wai Kit Leung, who previously contributed to such titles as **Saint Legend** and **Black Leopard**.

***Top Speed**, priced at $14.95, ships in April.*

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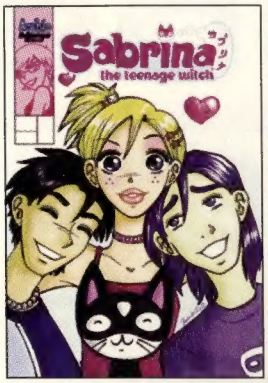
Sabrina adopts manga



Above: The cover to ***Sabrina the Teenage Witch*** *#58, the first manga issue of the Archie title; art by Tania del Rio.*

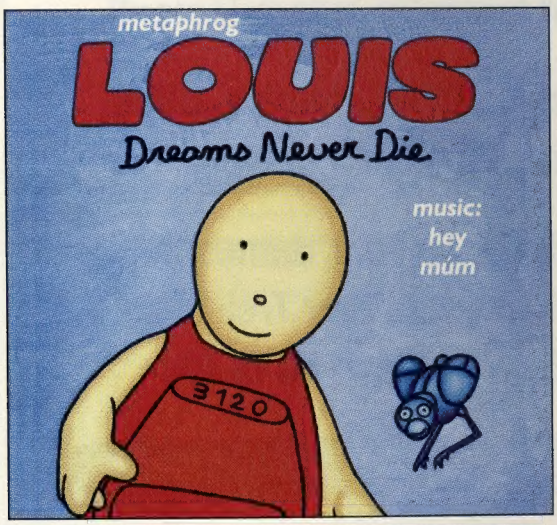
THERE seems to be no end to the influence of Japanese comics upon the American market with Archie Comics becoming the latest publisher to acknowledge the trend.

The New York-based publisher of teen humour titles has brought in Tania del Rio – a newcomer whose first work appears in the second volume of TokyoPop's *Rising Stars of Manga* – to make one of its flagship characters more accessible to today's mass audience.

Set to get a manga make-over is Sabrina the Teenage Witch. Now 41 years old, she first appeared in a backup strip in **Archie's Madhouse** #22 [1962]. Written by George Gladir, it was drawn by Dan DeCarlo, the artist credited with designing the current Archie house style. She is going Japanese with issue #58 of her latest series.

"Sabrina has always been a bit more esoteric than our other characters. In her early years, the artists experimented with different looks for her," said managing editor Victor Gorelick, explaining the reasons why the teenage witch was selected for the manga 'experiment'.

Sabrina the Teenage Witch *#58, ships May 25, priced $2.19.*



Metaphrog's Louis goes multimedia

A GLASGOW-based small press publisher is linking up with an indie record label for a multimedia one-shot that has attracted the backing of the Scottish Arts Council and Austro Mechana, Austria's equivalent to the Mechanical-Copyright Protection Society in the UK.

Co-produced by FatCat Records, the 44-page **Louis: Dreams Never Die** is the fourth book headlining the Franco-Scottish Metaphrog's adorable yet quirky creation. It comes with a CD, which contains an animated short plus music by Germany's Hey and Iceland's Múm. To be distributed in record shops as well as book and comic shops, the 8x8" all ages title is also available with a blue vinyl 7" and as a signed and numbered limited vinyl edition.

Further information about **Dreams Never Die** can be found at *metaphrog.com/flash/newlouis.swf*

Louis: Dreams Never Die*, priced $14.99/£8.99 [regular] and $39.99/ £24.99 [limited], ships in May.*

Lee and Ditko stories to launch new Marvel Age

AT THE risk of perplexing potential readers, Marvel is to launch a line of comics featuring stories based on its early 1960s superhero strips, thereby effectively creating a third continuity stream separate from those already existing in the *Ultimate* and Marvel Universe titles.

Not to be confused with the 1982 news magazine of the same name, *Marvel Age* kicks off with **Spider-Man**.

Younger readers

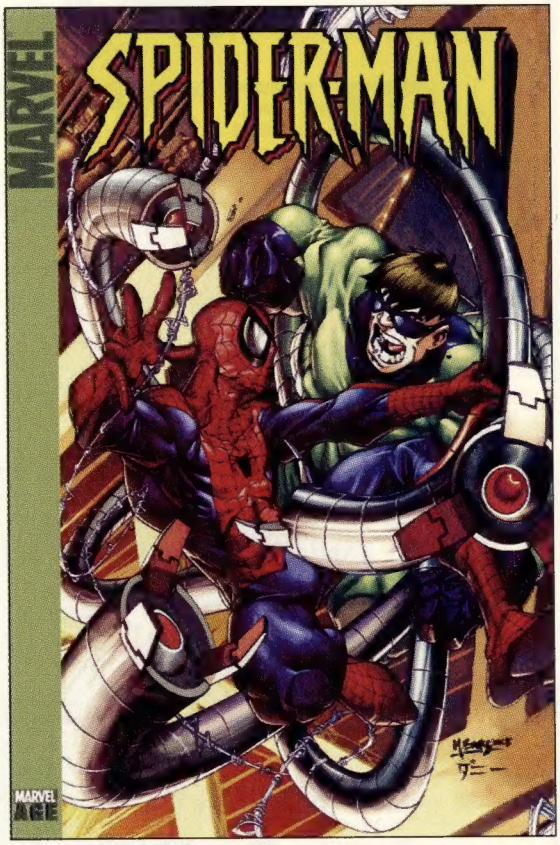
The monthly is written by Daniel Quantz – a screenwriter whose credits include two short films – and drawn by UDON's Mark Brooks, who is also the artist on **Cable & Deadpool**, which launches in March. It is to feature what is described as contemporary revisitings of classic stories by Spider-Man creators Stan Lee and Steve Ditko. Intended for younger readers, each issue is to carry a standalone tale.

The series begins with the hero's first encounter with the Vulture from **Amazing Spider-Man** #2 with the debut of Dr Octopus [from #3] lined up for #2.

A **Fantastic Four** series consisting of stories based on Lee and Jack Kirby's originals is already lined up to follow **Spider-Man**. Written by **Inhumans**' Sean McKeever, it is illustrated by **X-Men: Ronin**'s Makoto Nakatsuka.

Modern flair

Asked what difference there was between the *Marvel Age* titles and the *Ultimate* ones, Marvel's manager of sales David Gabriel replied "The *Ultimate* line is a reworking of the stories for a brand new audience and updating them with a modern flair that feels like a blockbuster movie. That's not *Marvel Age*. We're trying to do it simply and quietly – retell the original stories from the '60s in a modern way.



Pictured: The covers to four Marvel Age *titles –* ***Spider-Man*** *#2 [above] art by Mark Brooks and [below left to right] the first issues of the* ***Runaways***, ***Sentinel*** *and* ***Spider-Girl*** *digests.*

Tsunami digests

"It might have a little bit of a manga feel," he continued, "only because right now that's the 'hot' style in the current market for *Marvel Age*'s demographic, and we'd like to capitalise on that, but it's *not* a manga line – it's geared to getting new readers by offering the best stories and art that is the best match for both of them."

Also lined up to go under the *Marvel Age* umbrella is a line of reprint compilations in the manga/digest format. Each of the quarterlies is to contain five-to-six issues worth of material for $7.99.

First up are two *Tsunami* titles – **Runaways** and, ironically, **Sentinel** , which is axed with the February-shipping #12 – together with the oft-cancelled **Spider-Girl**, which gets yet another chance to find its audience.

Marvel Age: Spider-Man *#1, priced $2.99, ships on March 3.*

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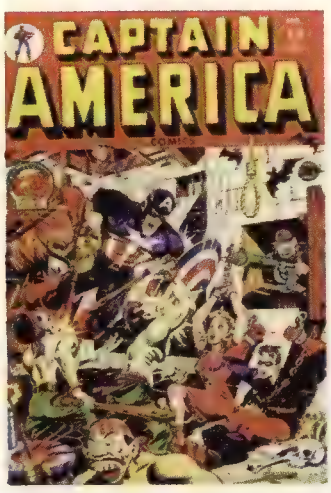

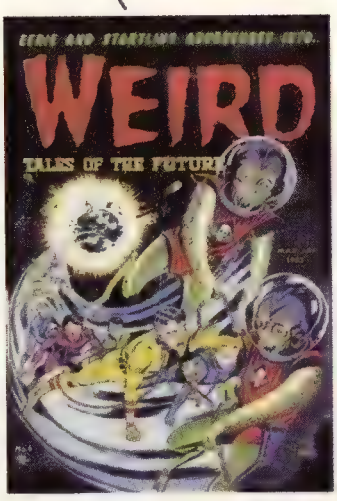

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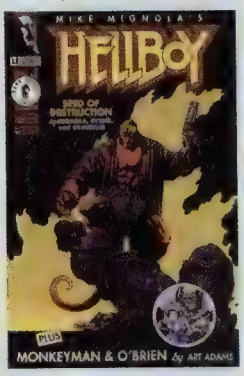
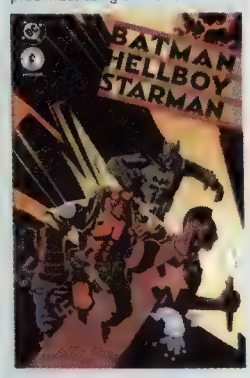
Hellwatch

After his debut in **San Diego Comic Con Comics** (1993), Hellboy is next seen in John Byrne's **Next Men** #21 (1993). In a segment drawn by Mignola, Next Man Danny crosses paths with the paranormal detective.



Hellboy #1 (1994) – Written and drawn by Mignola, the first of the regular (mini) series introduces Hellboy and the BPRD. John Byrne helps with scripting duties.

Dark Horse Presents #88 (1994) – Begins four issue story arc, *Hellboy: The Wolves of St August*. Mignola writes and draws plus illustrating all four covers.



Hellboy crashes the mainstream in the two-part **Batman/ Hellboy/Starman** (1999). The eclectic group faces a secret order, bent on resurrecting an elder god.

Hellboy hath no limits. . .

*Dark Horse's Hellboy gets the Hollywood makeover for what is set to be this year's blockbuster comics adaptation. **CI** offers up an inside look at the* Blade II *director's apocalyptic vision.*

Hellboy feature by
STEVEN TURNER

LOOKING for a kick ass romp with demons, Nazi occultists and a decaying cyborg assassin? Good, then Guillermo Del Toro's latest directorial feast, *Hellboy*, is the film for you.

This Easter, Mike Mignola's creation gets a Hollywood outing and if advance previews are anything to go by, it looks certain to be a frenetic piece of well-constructed movie mayhem.

Revelations

The plot, according to insiders, begins in a remote Scottish island in the latter stages of World War II, with demon worshipping Nazis and the mad Russian monk, Grigori Rasputin (Karel Roden), trying to summon the son of Hell and begin the end of the world.

A small band of G.I.s and a young Dr Broom (later played by veteran British actor John Hurt) of the Bureau for Paranormal Research and Development, disrupt the ceremony, kill the Nazis and find a young Hellboy. He is adopted by Broom and taken back to the United States.

The action cuts to present day where Hellboy (Ron Perlman) has become an urban legend, working for the BPRD with psychic merman Abe Sapien (Doug Jones voiced by David Hyde Pierce), love interest and pyrokinetic Liz Sherman (Selma Blair) and ex-FBI agent John Myers (Rupert Evans) who is drafted by the Bureau to be Hellboy's new chaperone.

"The biggest fan of **Hellboy** on Earth!" ...*Ron Perlman on director Del Toro*

Meanwhile, Rasputin has been re-awakened and reunited with disciple Kroenen – a sadistic, undead martial artist, who wields two retractable blades – and all hell breaks loose… literally. The monk resumes his quest for the destruction of mankind and is intent on bringing Hellboy, who may or may not be the beast of the Apocalypse, along for the ride. Premise set, the film flows through a host of sometimes comical, always visually impressive set pieces. These include a rampage through a city station with Sammael, the demon of resurrection, a jealous Hellboy following Myers and Liz Sherman on a date by leaping across buildings, a knockdown brawl with the Behemoth ("A great tentacle fight," stated Del Toro) and the inevitable showdown with Rasputin and his unholy gang.

In the beginning...

Mignola created **Hellboy** with the aim of writing "an interesting character that was not particularly commercial, but crammed with ideas like spooky old buildings, creepy frog people, mad scientists, giant Lovecraftian horrors and any other form of psychic phenomena I could imagine". The resulting Dark Horse series, published in 1994, was certainly a departure from the mainstream and became an instant success. A string of series followed and Mignola became a key figure in the comic world, winning multiple awards and gaining acclaim for his noir-esque art and gothic storylines.

Recently Mignola has branched into movie production, with Disney, on *Atlantis: The Lost Empire* (2001) as technology supervisor and on *Blade II* (2002) as a visual consultant. It was at this time that Mignola and director Del Toro started hatching a

Top : Hellboy, whom Del Toro views as "The world's foremost paranormal detective, an occult investigator that happens to be a monster" on ghostbusting duties. Above: Mignola's minimalistic art shows Hellboy, who has been described as Doc Savage meets HP Lovecraft, at his brooding best.

Above: Selma Blair plays Liz Sherman, BPRD agent and Hellboy's love interest. Below: Abe Sapien, occult expert named after President Lincoln. Wields strange psychic powers.

plan on how to turn a collection of "bizarre, inhuman monster kind of guys who are mostly good and a couple of humans, Nazi mad scientists and as many pulp cliches as I can possibly toss in" – as Mignola puts it – into a full fledged action movie.

Pilgrim's progress

With the critical success of *The Devil's Backbone* and the commercial success of *Blade II*, Del Toro was horror-man-of-the-moment and finally getting studios interested in his seven year quest to bring Hellboy to the big screen. The director, who lead actor Ron Perlman describes as "the biggest fan of **Hellboy** on Earth!", went as far as investing his own time and money on the project before it had even been considered by a studio. "I financed the Wayne Barlowe painting and a few sketches and studies. We had the guys at Rick Baker Studios make three sculptures of Hellboy. When we got greenlit in reality, the characters were already advanced. I even started paying my own living expenses in LA to keep in contact there."

As for how he sold the idea, Del Toro summised, "I said to Revolution, 'Listen, *Men In Black* was a comic, you didn't know that. *The Mask* was a comic, you didn't know that. This is a comic, a lot of people won't know that, but the incredible thing about the comic, and the thing that we're trying to be very faithful to is the concept of the character. He's so stunningly unique."

This is reflected in the screenplay, also penned by the Mexican born director and based loosely on the comic's first story arc. "*Seed of Destruction* is the jumping board of the movie, but is just the basic idea," explained Del Toro. "All I can say is you get the action, you get the monsters, you get all of that, but you're going to fall in love with the red guy, the blue guy, the pyro girl."

Whosoever casts...

Del Toro and Mignola had already made a shortlist of actors who they wanted to play the diverse characters in the Hellboy universe, "John Hurt was number one," said Del Toro. "He looked exactly like the comic book Broom and we went after him because we were hoping that we would have that thing that he has, that is both an authority and a frailty.

"And we both knew independently who we wanted for Hellboy, it was just a case of who's going to put their cards down first. We almost said "Ron Perlman" at the same time." Having showcased Perlman as the vampire Reinhardt in the *Blade* sequel, they both pushed the studio to cast the, in his own words, non-bankable movie star. "Guillermo was able to take that performance, show it to the studio and say, "we have someone here who can hold his own," said Perlman. The main cast is rounded out nicely by Selma Blair, better known for teenage comedy flix *Legally Blonde* and *The Sweetest Thing*, who has a "very tragic, very dark, very Gothic intrigue to her that the movie takes advantage of," according to Del Toro.

With a large budget, set at $65 million, superb CGI graphics and Oscar-winning Rick Baker creating the prosthetics, the film is set to be visually stunning and with Del Toro's script and strong casting highlighting some of the more subtle relationship points of Mignola's characters, we should not lose sight of the movie's main attraction.

"Much of the fun of the movie," according to Perlman, "is watching Hellboy take some devastating licks before dishing it back to his counterparts tenfold."

Hellboy *hits theatres from Sony and Revolution Studios on April 2nd in the US, and April 16th in the UK.*

ABOVE: The decaying Kroenen in full Nazi regalia. A disciple of Rasputin, he is now kept alive by the 'anti-life' mask and clockwork-style replacement bodyparts. BELOW: "The makeup goes from very thick to very thin. Ron didn't have to do many push-ups to be in that shape." – Guillermo Del Toro on the Hellboy bodysuit.

In Brief

PETER Bagge's **Startling Stories: Incorrigible Hulk** has been cancelled.

Marvel has offered no reason for the move nor has it given any indication as to whether the $2.99 one-shot follow-up to the **Hate!** creator's **Startling Stories: The Megalomaniacal Spider-Man** is to be rescheduled for a later date. It was due to ship on January 28.

NEW **Thanos** writer Keith Giffen has a number of new projects in development.

Not only is he reuniting with co-writer J M DeMatteis and artist Kevin Maguire for **I Can't Believe It's Not the Justice League** – a sequel to their four-issue **Formerly Known as the Justice League** – but he is also writing an IDW miniseries set to launch next October. Discussing **Common Foe**, which is being illustrated by Andy Kuhn, Giffen said the five-parter is "where I try to redefine the concept of the vampire set in World War II."

Giffen is also drawing **Gut Wrencher**. Very little is known about the project, which is being written by current horror supremo Steve Niles.

NBM IS to publish an English-language edition of a French hardcover featuring strips based on poems by Victor Hugo.

The 96-page, 6x8½" **Comics Poetry** will include the adaptations as well as each poem in its original form. The $17.95 volume ships in April.

THE SEARCHER and the Sword is the first graphic novel to be originated by DC for the **Elfquest** line it acquired from WaRP Graphics.

Written and illustrated by series creator Wendy Pini, the 92-page hardcover is being lined up for a summer release.

NEARLY two weeks after the first issue was due to ship, Marvel has pulled another title from the schedules – MAX Comics' **Ant-Man** miniseries.

Written by Daniel Way and drawn by Clayton Crain, the $2.99 four-parter was to have premiered on December 24. It has been "delayed indefinitely".

VIZ HAS granted Barnes & Noble a six-month exclusive on Yutaka Izubuchi's three-volume manga series, **RahXephon**.

The black and white softcovers are to be available from the book mega-retailer from April. Other retailers will have to wait until September to acquire the mecha title.

JIM LEE is designing the cast of **The Intimates**.

The unscheduled WildStorm superhero series is written by Joe Casey and drawn by Italian artist Guiseppe Camuncoli.

Monolith unveiled at DC

WILDSTORM'S **21 Down** writers Jimmy Palmiotti and Justin Gray are planning to set their next joint project in DC's superhero universe.

Joined by Marvel MAX's **Howard the Duck** artist Phil Winslade, the writing duo is to introduce what Palmiotti describes as "a secret from the forgotten past, an urban legend hidden beneath New York City" into DC's "Original Universe."

Continuing to discuss their **Monolith** series with **CI**, the co-founder of Marvel Knights added, "Enormously powerful and created from the very streets he protects, the Monolith is the living embodiment of the greatest city in the world. Teamed with Alice, a young woman on the run from a ruthless killer, the Monolith must learn to adapt to the modern-day concept of justice in a world more violent than the one he left behind."

Individual quirks

Commenting on the series' DCU setting, Gray, a native New Yorker like Palmiotti, added, "This is one of my favourite things about working on **Monolith**. There isn't a preconceived idea of how Monolith and others are going to interact. You pretty much know Batman and Superman are going to have a specific type of conversation when they get together.

"Everyone knows each other in the DCU and make allowances for their individual quirks," he added. "Monolith, Alice and her best friend Tilt can say odd things and behave unpredictably in front of these icons."

Summing up **Monolith**, Palmiotti said that he and Gray were trying for "a bit of history telling, a little bit of **Beauty and the Beast**, and to create a modern superhero icon, all at once."

Eye of the Storm

Palmiotti and Gray are also reworking their 2002 title, **21 Down**, for its imminent relaunch as a mature readers title under WildStorm's *Eye of the Storm* imprint.

Comparing the 2002 and 2004 versions of the comic, Palmiotti said, "For the diehard fans, not much will change except there will be a fair amount of more nudity and foul language.

"The violence was always there," he continued, "but I think the overall tone of the book will be turned up a couple of notches. If you are picking up the book for the first time, we bring you right up to date on everything from the past year by page three."

***Monolith** #1, priced $2.99, ships on February 4.*

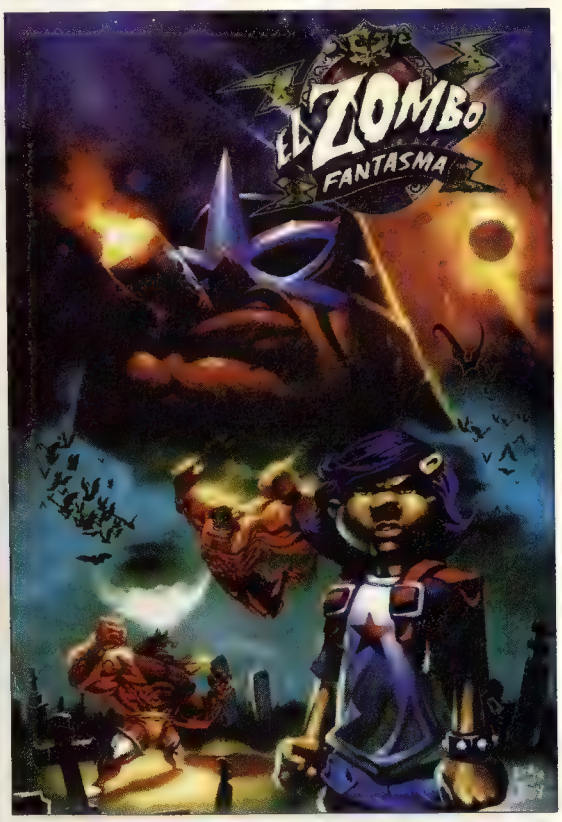
Pioneer's rarities collections continue

CHECKER Books is set to expand its series collecting little seen early work by *Little Nemo in Slumberland* creator Winsor McCay.

With two compilations already available, the Ohio-based publisher is adding a further nine. These are to contain such rarities as McCay's *Hungry Henrietta*, *Phoolish Phillip*, *Little Sammy Sneeze*, *Mr Goodenough* and *Poor Jake* strips.

The third volume in the series is a 200-page, black-and-white trade paperback collecting all of McCay's 1907 *Dream of the Rarebit Fiend* and *A Pilgrim's Progress* as well as a variety of his spot illustrations and editorial cartoons.

***Winsor McCay: Early Works III**, priced $19.95, ships in April.*



El Zombo walks

LUCHA Libra, as Mexican professional wrestling is known, has always had a reputation for being over the top, if not outright weird, but Dark Horse is taking the unique genre one step further.

Its three-issue **El Zombo** is adding the walking dead and a thirst for vengeance into what is already a potentially outrageous mix.

The series – created by newcomer Kevin Munroe, Full Clip Studio/Neko Press's **Nightwraith** artist Dave Wilkins and colourist Tony Wilkins – kicks off when the temperamental El Zombo is brutally murdered in a back alley after refusing to take a dive in the ring.

Driven by his desire for revenge, the pro-wrestling champ accepts the chance to return to Earth, only to discover there is a price. He has to protect a 10-year old girl from East L.A. from a nasty accident – and she is as moody and difficult to deal with as he can be.

***El Zombo** #1, priced $2.99, ships on April 21.*

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Vampiric crime family uncovered

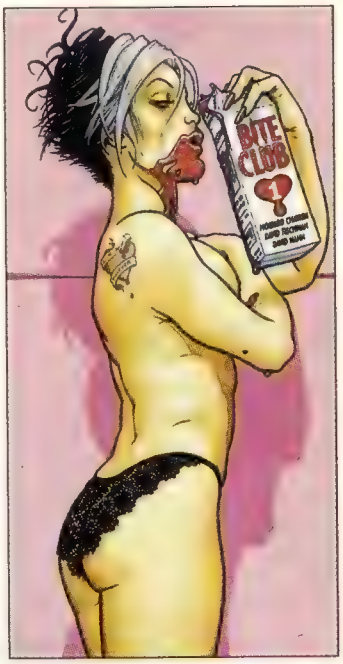
DESCRIBED by DC/Vertigo as *The Sopranos* with vampires, **Bite Club** is a six-parter that centres on a dysfunctional Mafia family.

Written by **The Secret Society of Super-Heroes**' Howard Chaykin and David Tischman, the miniseries is illustrated by David Hahn, creator of Antarctic Press's **Private Beach**.

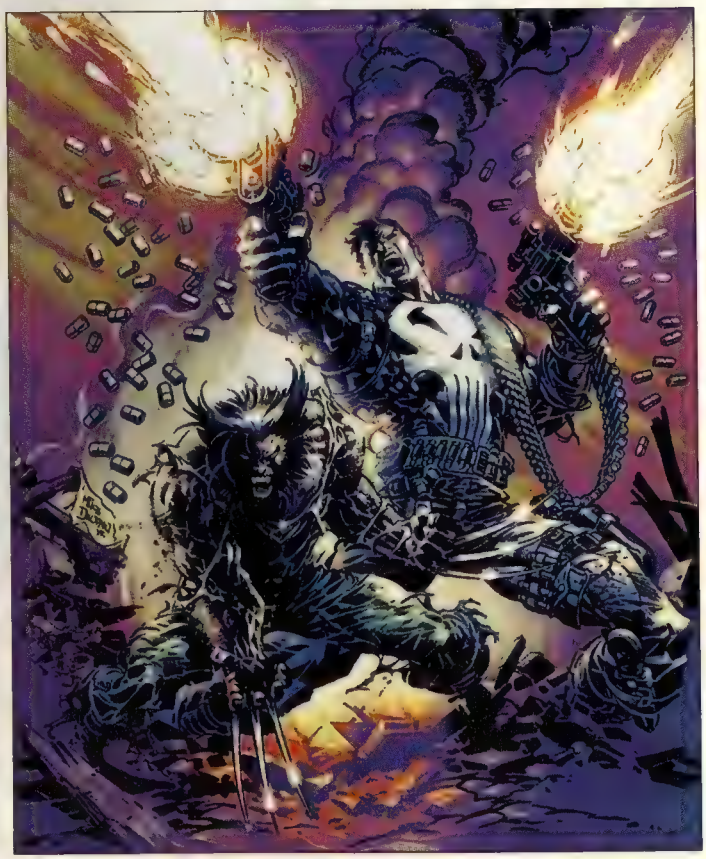
Set in Miami, it begins with the brutal slaying of Eduardo Del Toro, who leaves control of the cartel to his youngest son, Leto. Miami's first vampire priest, the principled young man wants nothing to do with the family business.

But the mob is also in Leto's blood and his conflict between 'God' and 'Godfather' is the backdrop to this new take on the vampire myth.

"With his father's death, he is thrown back into the thick of it, and throughout the course of the first arc, he has to decide if this is a job he wants to take. Clearly, because it's a series, he'll take it, but we'll deal with his moral dilemma, as well as the fact that he's a priest, so there's a part of him thinking that maybe he can take this bad thing that his family has done, and turn it into a good thing," explained Tischman.



Above: Frank Quitely's art for the cover to the first issue of ***Bite Club****, a $2.95 Vertigo six-parter, which premieres on April 14.*



X-STATIX *writer Peter Milligan is the latest to bring together two of Marvel's most violent heroes. In tandem with former* ***Incredible Hulk*** *artist Lee Weeks, Milligan has crafted a five-parter that drops the Punisher in the middle of the South American jungle. There, the deadly vigilante is hoping to find a final refuge where the nastiest of the nasty disappear to, but Wolverine is on his trail. Shown above is Mike Deodato Jr's cover to the $2.99* ***Wolverine/Punisher*** *#1, which ships on March 31.*

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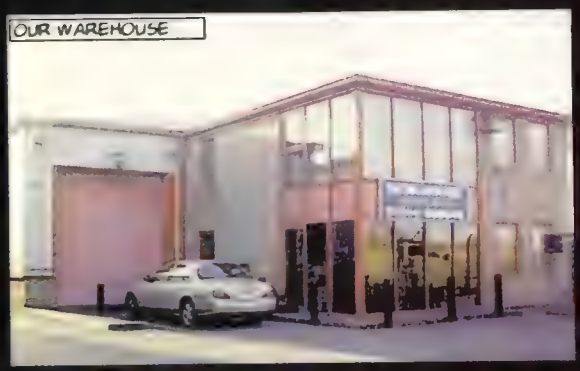

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Don Lawrence: 1928-2003

Obituary by
ALAN WOOLLCOMBE

DON LAWRENCE, the leading British adventure strip artist whose dramatic work won him acclaim and awards (including a Dutch knighthood) right across Europe, died on 29 December 2003 at the age of 75.

Although he drew many strips up to the 1970s for the then-popular British weekly adventure comics and later on for Dutch publications, his place in history rests on his groundbreaking painted art for two epic science fiction series: *The Trigan Empire* in the UK, and **Storm** in the Netherlands.

Donald Southam Lawrence was born in the London suburb of East Sheen on November 17, 1928. Educated at St Pauls School, Hammersmith, Lawrence felt outshone by his academically excellent brother. In an interview he was later to claim that he "took refuge from academic studies by doing art. I had to force myself to do it because it's not something I have a natural talent for."

After National Service in the Army (1947-1949), Lawrence studied art at Borough Polytechnic (now South Bank University) and realised that he wanted to draw comic strips "because they were full of life and told stories."

On graduation in 1953, he approached Ted Holmes at Amalgamated Press with samples, who referred him to Mick Anglo's Gower Street Studios. Lawrence's highly detailed specimen page showing Marvelman flying over a skyscraper took him a week to do, but got him the job – at the rate of £1 per page! For the next four years he was to work primarily on **Marvelman**, but also drawing western heroes **Davy Crockett** and **Daniel Boone**.

Despite the production-line nature of the work, Lawrence was eventually able to produce up to 10 pages a week and, with a pay rise doubling his rewards, could earn a bank manager's salary – useful for a married man with five children.

Initially, Anglo would supply the script or a rough outline, but after a while Lawrence was left to write the stories himself.

Falling out with Anglo over pay, in 1957 Lawrence moved to Odhams Press, where he spent three years drawing *Wells Fargo* in line and wash for **Zip** and **Swift**, before returning to Amalgamated Press to draw *Billy the Kid* in **Sun**.

Sun merged with **Lion**, and it was at this point that Lawrence found his niche in historical adventure strips such as *Olac the Gladiator* (1959-60; **Tiger**), *Karl the Viking* (1960-64;

Lion) and *Maroc the Mighty* (1964-65, also in **Lion**).

Up to 1965 Lawrence's work was all in black and white, but on the strength of the full colour *Karl the Viking and the Ghost of the Tideless Sea* story he had painted for the 1965 **Lion Annual**, he was offered the lead strip in the new **Ranger** comic from Fleetway Publications.

Scriptwriter Mike Butterworth was fascinated by ancient history and had come up with a sci-fi analogue of the Roman Empire, wherein the heroic and far-sighted chief of a civilised tribe of wanderers on the Planet Elekton welds an empire out of nothing. The result, *The Rise and Fall of the Trigan Empire*, was unlike anything previously seen in British comics, with Lawrence's lavish full-colour renderings of this lost world the star attraction.

Ranger was swallowed up by the educational weekly **Look and Learn** after nine months, but *Trigan Empire*, with its high art values and intelligent, exciting storylines, continued for 17 years, only ending with the demise of **Look and Learn** in 1982.

The strip remains one of the high points in British comic strip history and Lawrence's two fully painted pages per week were unrivalled.

The series also proved a massive moneyspinner for publishers IPC Magazines, who syndicated it widely across Europe without passing on the glad tidings – or any royalties – to their star artist. When Lawrence got wind of it at *Comics 101*, the UK's first convention celebrating British comics, he promptly demanded a raise in his page rates.

Insulted by IPC's derisory counter-offer, Lawrence quit, a decision he instantly regretted having recently lost his only other regular source of income, painting the wordless scrapes of *Carrie,* who brought a whole new meaning to the term centrespread in men's magazine **Mayfair**.

But if British publishers had no further use for his services, others were more farsighted. The popularity of *Trigan Empire* in Holland immediately led to an invitation from the Dutch publishers Oberon to work for their new weekly **Eppo**.

After an abortive start on a strip titled *Commandant Grek*, Lawrence co-created *Storm*, another SF epic, featuring a spaceman whose ship plunges into the red spot on Jupiter, flinging it far into a future where Earth's oceans have disappeared. Editor Martin Lodewijk, who had dreamed up the concept after reading an article in **National Geographic**, was already tied up with his editorial duties on **Eppo** and writing two other popular Dutch strips, and the new series passed through the hands of a number of different scriptwriters, including Lawrence himself, until 1981 when Lodewijk revamped the storyline entirely, transferring the action to the planet of Pandarve.

Lodewijk was able to tap into all of Lawrence's skills as an artist, and their collaboration saw Lawrence producing his best work ever. Lawrence's final full-length **Storm** volume appeared in 1995. Book 22 was published in 2001, but, owing to a botched cataract operation which led to the loss of sight in his right eye, five pages were completed by his ex-assistant Liam Sharp.

While **Storm** is hardly known in the UK, Lawrence won the Society of Strip Illustration's Lifetime Achievement Award in 1980. In mainland Europe, he received the Grand Prix Sptialat in 1981, the Gouden Bommel award in 1987, De Stripschapprijs in 1994 and the prestigious Pantera di Lucca Lifetime Achievement Award in 1998. A 1994 retrospective exhibition of his work at Breda, Holland, attracted over 10,000 visitors, and further exhibitions were held at the 1997 Lucca Festival and at Sussex University's Gardner Arts Centre in 1999.

Twelve deluxe hardbound volumes, **Don Lawrence: The Collection**, reprinted many of his strips and illustrations and a limited edition 300-page colour volume was issued on his 70th birthday in 1998. Then, to celebrate his 75th birthday, Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands made him a Knight of the Order of Oranje-Nassau.

New English-language hardback compilations of his entire run on *Trigan Empire* and **Storm** are scheduled from his fan club, the Don Lawrence Collection [www.don lawrence.nl] from May 2004.

Funeral Report by **LIAM SHARP**

I've had a long and emotional weekend. But it has to be said, as funerals go, Don's was among the finest.

My wife and I set off at 8.30am on Saturday morning from Derby, arriving at Jevington, in East Sussex, at 1.30pm.

The funeral was at 2.00, but already a crowd was gathering. The first shock was seeing Don's brother, who resembles Don more in his absence than he did when Don was alive. The fog smothered the church and graveyard with a fittingly dramatic aura. The rain had stopped, the air was crisp.

The coffin arrived shortly after us. Martin Lodewijk, long term collaborator and writer on most of the **Storm** albums, later remarked in his tribute that it was "such a small coffin for such a very big man."

The turnout was great. People were forced to stand in the ancient Norman-built church, as the pews were all taken up. Mourners from all over the UK, Holland and Germany, packed into what had started out seeming a large space to fill. Mike Lake, part owner of the Forbidden Planet franchise, was there, as was Rob Van Bavel, who runs Don's incomparable fan club along with assorted publishers and editors.

Also present were Glenn Fabry, David Lloyd, Chris Weston and Ian Gibson to name but a few others from the profession. I realised that over the years I had come to know a good third of the two hundred or more people who attended. It was very much like a family funeral.

Liz, Don's lovely wife, looked amazingly elegant. Her composure was to be admired, though I know it was all extremely hard for her.

Don was not a religious man. His youngest son, Kai, later said he imagined Don coughing at various points through the proceedings. But the service was brief in its formal, traditional aspect, and long in its heart. W.H.Auden's classic poem *Stop all the Clocks*, made popular in *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, and *Death is Nothing at All* by Henry Scott Holland were moving contributions by Kai and his older brother, Chuffy, respectively. And Martin's tribute was particularly heart wrenching.

I realised, being much younger than Don, how late I had come into his life, and how much of their lives many of the attendant guests had shared with him. That made me feel very humble, and doubly honoured to have enjoyed the relatively short time it now seems I had with him.

Finally, and the bit that broke me most (the old bastard) was the playing of Monty Python's *Always Look on the Bright Side of Life* as the coffin was taken out.

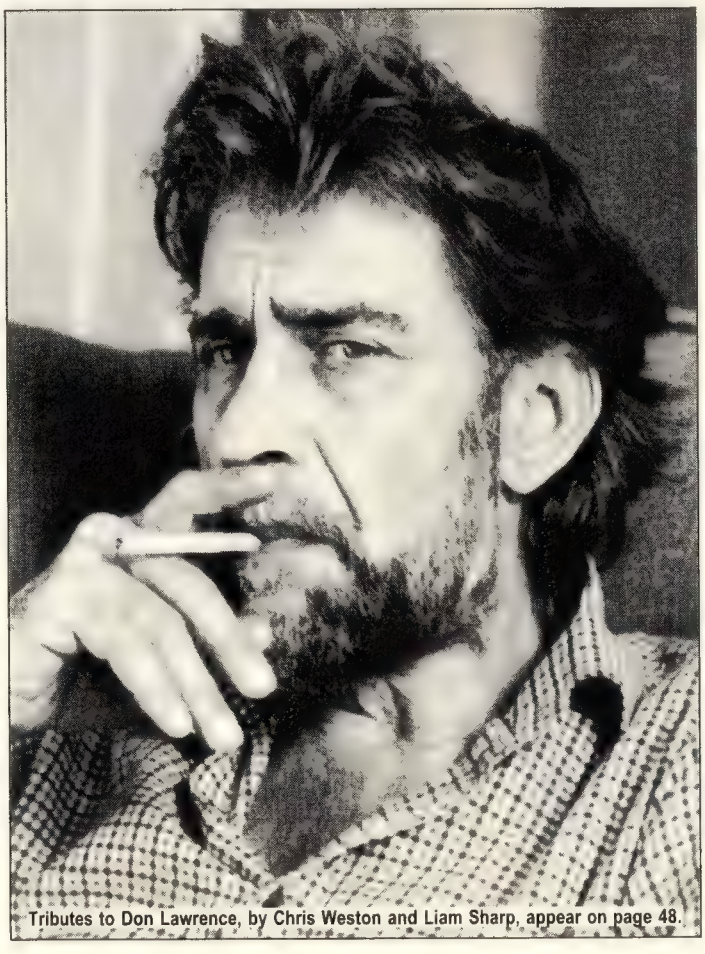
An old friend, fan and colleague of Don's, Meerten Welleman, was kind enough to give me a rose to throw onto the coffin. It had slipped my mind, not having been to many funerals in my time. I felt foolish about that. Don would have laughed.

The entire menagerie, it seemed, gathered back at The Old Post Office, Don's home for over 20 years. His drawing board had been left exactly as it was the last time he sat at it. It was terribly moving being in the house without his being there. In the kitchen/dining room, Meerten made the announcement and presentation that Don had been honoured by the Queen of Holland, and was a Knight of Orange. Thankfully, Liz had known about this, and had not been able to keep it from Don before he died. (And, as I understand it, Don had been delighted by this!)

For we in England who never embraced his artwork, and for the US, who likewise never afforded Don the honour and attention his work thoroughly deserved, let this lend some perspective to the magnitude of his artistic achievements in Europe. I can think of no other strip artist receiving a Knighthood, in the UK or otherwise. Nor any other strip artist who could genuinely be called a national treasure, as indeed Don was to the Dutch.

To great acclaim, **Storm** was published in pretty much every country in Europe except the UK, and in every language except English. And, as Martin Lodewijk rightly noted in his tribute, Don was so very English.

A sad day, but a fitting day, for a great man who – as Martin once again pointed out – was as loved by his fans for being who he was as much as for what he was able to give them artistically.



Tributes to Don Lawrence, by Chris Weston and Liam Sharp, appear on page 48.

In Brief

DARK Horse has acquired the rights to **Samurai Executioner**, Kazuo Koike and Goseki Kojima's precursor to their classic **Lone Wolf and Cub** manga.

The black and white series, which features Decapitator Asaemon, is to be collected in 10 4x6" digests with the first volume set to ship in June.

FORMER Vertigo and Marvel Knights editor Stuart Moore's **Para** premieres from Penny Farthing Press in March.

A $2.95 six-parter, drawn by Pablo Villalobos and Mostafa Moussa, it is described by Moore as a high-tech paranormal thriller.

THE FIRST book in Ryo Takamisaki's **Megaman NT Warrior** manga is set to ship from Viz in May.

The series, known in Japan as **Rock Man EXE**, is based on the anime, which itself was based on the computer game.

THERE will be no **October Surprises** from DC, which has cancelled the 128-page **Gen^{13}** trade paperback.

Due to ship on February 4, the $19.95 compilation was to contain **Gen^{13}** #7-11, written by Chris Claremont and featuring art by Alé Garza, Ramón F Bachs, Dustin Weaver, Carlos D'Anda, Sandra Hope and Raúl Fernández.

MOONSTONE has acquired the rights to *I Love a Mystery*.

The radio show, which aired from 1939-53 and generated four spin-off movies, was created by Carlton E Morse. Cited as an inspiration for Hanna-Barbera's animated *Scooby Doo – Where are You?* TV series, it featured three former soldiers who formed their own detective agency.

New material is being developed by Moonstone, which is kicking off its license with the summer release of a trade paperback reprinting the *I Love a Mystery* newspaper strip. Created by Don Sherwood, this ran for only six months and was published only in Europe.

LEVIATHAN is a silent ode to the whale by Jens Harder.

Featuring two-colour illustrations accompanied by relevant quotes from famous works of literature, the 7½x10½" graphic novel ships in April. A 144-page NBM hardcover, it is priced $34.95.

MARVEL is without a marketing manager after Michael Doran was let go at the end of 2003.

Also dropped at the same time as Doran, the ***Newsarama*** co-founder who had been with the company just over a year, was Wilson Ramos, who spent 10 years at Marvel. He handled art returns.

Niles unleashes wave of horror

THE SKILLS of the writer described by many as the modern master of comic-book horror is being given free rein by IDW.

Not only is Steve Niles returning to the locale of his highly popular **30 Days of Night** for a second sequel to that vampire tale but he is also lining up two series about zombies – one an adaptation of a cult movie classic – as well as introducing his newest character in his own title.

Return to Barrow takes Niles and Ben Templesmith, artist on **30 Days of Night** and its sequel, **Dark Days**, back to the Alaskan town where the sun goes down for a month at a time.

"What the hell has happened to this town since all this has happened? How have things changes? And how do they prepare every year going into total darkness again? That's what this is, me addressing that with all new characters," said Niles, referring to the four-parter, which premieres in March.

Following in April is **Dawn of the Dead**, an adaptation of George A Romero's 1978 film rather than the remake, which premieres in the US in March. It is illustrated by Chee, the writer's **Wake the Dead** partner.

Gory antics

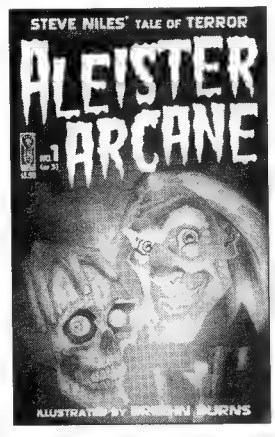
Also launching in April is **Aleister Arcane**, which features a character Niles describes as "an old late night creature feature host who is – I don't want to give away too much – but is in effect forced off the air for his gory antics by conservative parents.

"Basically," he continued, "he's turned into the town boogie man. He's the old man who lives in the house and doesn't talk to anybody. Finally, after decades go by, the children of the parents – who forced him off the air – befriend him. It's a lot more light-hearted."

The three-parter is drawn by animator Breehn Burns, who most recently illustrated Slave Labor Graphics' **Gloomcookie**.

It is followed in May by **Remains**. Priced $3.99 like Niles' other three titles, the five-issue series is drawn by ex-**Avengers** artist Kieron Dwyer.

"It's kind of an unrequited love between this blackjack dealer and a stripper who are the only survivors in Vegas," explained the writer. "That's a classic story right there and then you throw in the living dead? Like he doesn't have enough problems."



*Above: The cover to **Aleister Arcane**#1; art by Breehn Burns. Top: Chee's art for the cover to **Dawn of the Dead** #1.*

Whedon on X-Men

ALTHOUGH Marvel has yet to confirm the rumours, it seems all but certain that Joss Whedon is to partner with **Planetary** artist John Cassaday on **New X-Men**.

Whedon has previously scripted **Fray**, a futuristic spin-off from his *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* TV series. Unfortunately, the final issue of the Dark Horse 2001 eight-parter, which is now available in trade paperback, suffered poor sales, shipping almost 14 months after the series launched.

The writer, who had produced an unused script for the *X-Men* movie, is the latest on a growing list of cult movie and TV creators to script Marvel comics. He follows *Dogma*'s Kevin Smith – who has written Marvel's **Daredevil** – and *Babylon 5*'s J M Straczynski, who has worked wonders reviving **Amazing Spider-Man**'s flagging fortunes.

All admit to being comics fans as is *Kill Bill*'s Quentin Tarantino, who is also said to be in talks with Marvel.

While the *Buffy* creator's scripting of **New X-Men** seems certain for next year, it remains uncertain who is to bridge the gap until then, following the departure of current writer Grant Morrison with March's #154.

Two names are constantly being mentioned for this role: Neil **(1602)** Gaiman and **X-Statix**' Peter Milligan, with each reported to be writing a six issue run.

Arts Council funds UK graphic novel

AN INDIE writer has been able to get his first graphic novel produced and printed professionally thanks to a four-figure grant from the Arts Council of England.

Sean Michael Wilson's **Angel of the Woods** is a black and white 84-pager illustrated by Argentinian artist Jorge Heufemann, who has worked on Italian comics for several years.

Discussing his project with **CI**, the writer said it is about the desire to escape conformity and the magical event that allows the central character to do so.

"It's quite an unusual story and one that may well appeal to non-comic readers I hope, because there is little of the normal superheroics or clichés of mainstream comics," Wilson continued. "It's a story about very ordinary people who get into an intense situation, but who still behave just as ordinary people would do.

"Apart from one of them, Terry, for whom this really does become a life-changing situation," he added. "It's a classic story of a situation of vital change in an ordinary person's life."

The $8.99/£5.99 **Angel of the Woods**, is available now direct from the publisher. Further information can be obtained by logging on to: *boychildproductions.co.uk*

*BUTCH Guice's first project since quitting CrossGen is to be a graphic novel series for Humanoids. The former **Ruse** artist is teaming up with **The Possessed** co-writers Geoff (**JSA**) Johns and Kriss Grimminger for the two-volume **Olympus**. The title, which was written before Johns signed his three-year exclusive with DC, follows a team of archeology students and a band of mercenaries who become trapped together on Mount Olympus. There they learn there is more than a grain of truth in the legends. "It features every great monster from Greek mythology, from Medusa to the Stymphalian Birds," said Humanoids editor Paul Benjamin of the yet to be scheduled series.*

Doujinshi hits US

IT WOULD bring a legion of lawyers down on US or European fans, but copyright infringement appears to an accepted part of the Japanese comics scene.

Doujinshi are indie or small press manga titles. Produced with print runs of up to an impressive 10,000 and sold at major conventions, they often feature stars of such major properties as *Sailor Moon*, *Dragon Ball*, or *Yu-Gi-Oh* engaged in hentai [erotic] or yaoi [erotic gay] relationships.

This is the backdrop for the stories in CPM Manga's black and white **Comic Party** and the source of the anthology's writers and artists.

The series kicks off with the 168-page **Party Time** in which a group of young creators attempt to produce their own doujinshi in time for a big manga festival.

They are not only wondering if they will be able to come up with a hit – which could lead to professional manga work – but also to which characters they should give the yaoi treatment.

***Comic Party** volume 1: **Party Time**, priced $9.99, ships on April 14.*

CI #166 competition winners

IN **CI** #166, five readers were offered the opportunity to each win a bundle of Harvey Pekar/ **American Splendor** collections, courtesy of Titan Books and Turnaround Book Services. The lucky winners were:

J Kershaw, Cowes, Isle of Wight
Andy Reid, Gillingham
Marsha Harris, Taunton
Brent Sissons, Windsor
Cliff Thornton, Buckie, Scotland

Reader votes upset the regular pattern this time, their "mainstream" scoring of the 10 most popular sections of the issue showing little interest in normally popular comics minutaie:

1 News International (20.1%)
2 American Splendor feature (14.5%)
3 Reviews (9.7%)
4 Novel Graphics (6.6%)
5 NetWorks (6.1%)
6 Q&A (6.0%)
7 Talking Shop (5.6%)
8 Frame to Frame (4.7%)
9 In the Gutter (4.6%)
10 Competition (4.1%)

... No Advance Listings (usually in the top three) or reader rants Comment and Letters, not even *choke* Sez Dez, while Novel Graphics scored its highest ever! The least popular feature, following "None", was Biff's Illuminations with Advance Listings coming second.

CUT OUT COUPON ALONG DOTTED LINE

Grand prize: Art of Hellboy, the new £37.95 hardback

First prize: Hellboy: Weird Tales, the £14.99 paperback

*Celebrating the April release of Guillermo Del Toro's Hellboy movie, Titan Books is releasing a lavish large format full colour hardcover, **The Art of Hellboy**, with 200 behind-the-scenes pages, plus commentary by Mike Mignola and the director's on-set diary. In addition, Titan is also releasing the collected **Hellboy: Weird Tales** as a 128 page full colour softcover, including work by John Cassaday and Alex Maleev*

To enter, simply choose the correct answer to the following question:

Who is Hellboy's merman associate in the BPRD?

a) Buzz Sapien
b) Abe Sapien
c) Homo Sapien

Name: _____
(Please print)

Address: _____
(Street & number)

_____
(Town or city)

_____
(County or State, post code or zip code and country if outside UK)

The winners will be selected and announced in Comics International #170

Please also complete the following:
My five favourite features this issue are (please mark in order as *1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th* – no ticks):

___ NEWS INTERNATIONAL
___ SEZ DEZ
___ HELLBOY FEATURE
___ DON LAWRENCE TRIBUTE
___ TALKING SHOP
___ NOVEL GRAPHICS
___ FRAME TO FRAME
___ PANEL BEATERS
___ BIFF'S ILLUMINATIONS
___ ADVANCE LISTINGS
___ IN THE GUTTER
___ NETWORKS
___ Q AND A
___ REVIEWS
___ LETTERS
___ COMIC CUTS
___ EVENTS GUIDE
___ ADVERTISEMENTS
___ COMPETITION
___ DIRECTORY

PLUS... which of the above is your LEAST favourite, the one you skipped reading, the one you wish we'd replace with a new contender for the top spot:

_____

Send this form (sorry, no faxes, copies or e-mails) to:

ART OF HELLBOY COMPETITION
COMICS INTERNATIONAL,
345 DITCHLING ROAD, BRIGHTON BN1 6JJ

All entries must be postmarked before February 27th, 2004

The Art of GONE
online exhibition

THERE HE IS!
OH HEY FRIENDS IS ON TONIGHT
MY DAD WOULDNT UNDER-STAND
IVE GOT TO GET ANOTHER JOB
I REALLY NEED A NEW OVEN
I WISH I WAS NAKED
-HAVENT DONE IT FOR A YEAR
MAY BE A DOG WILL KEEP US TOGETHER
A CURRY
IF I HAD A GUN..
SHE NEVER TALKED TO ME LIKE THAT WHEN I HAD HAIR
WHY DID THEY STOP MAKING VOYAGER?
GOD, I NEED A DRINK!
IVE GOT TO GET ANOTHER JOB

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www.tgtokyo.com

or

phone 0191 2765579 for details.

UK indie plans further expansion

ESTABLISHED late in 2002, AP Comics continues to make inroads on the UK direct market comics scene.

With nine titles already under its belt or imminent, the St Albans-based contender, which concentrates on miniseries, is looking for even more growth in 2004. Not only does it have a second **Darkham Vale** 10-parter lined up for the summer but it also has no less than a further six titles in development, although it is keeping the wraps on three of them.

*ABOVE: APC cover for **The Chase** #1 with art by Inaki Miranda and Eva de le Cruz. TOP: **AP Preview** #1 cover art.*

Of the others, two are to be spotlighted in the £1.50 first issue of APC's **Preview**. Launching in May, the quarterly is to showcase new comics two months in advance of their debut as well as existing titles.

Also scheduled to premiere in the summer is **The Chase**, a bimonthly 10-parter by Spanish creators Adriano Miranda (story) and Inaki Miranda and Eva de le Cruz (art), who recently illustrated a *Judge Dredd* story for **2000 AD**.

Described as *Total Recall* meets *Sliders*, **B1N4RY** is APC's first superhero comic. A four-parter, written by Richard Emms with art by newcomer Jim Sutherns, it is tentatively scheduled for the autumn.

Set to arrive slightly later is **Madhouse**. Another four-parter this one is written by Marco Lopez and drawn by South American artist Carlos Paul.

Image offers tale of World War I horror

IF World War One wasn't horrific enough, just think how much worse it would be if the combatants had not only to deal with such modern horrors as mustard gas and tanks but also with vampires, werewolves, zombies and Frankenstein's Monster

That is the premise of a black and white 104-page Image graphic novel by newcomers Robert Tinnell, *So You Downloaded a Demon* director Todd Livingston and the unlikely art choice of **Parliament of Justice**'s Neil Vokes.

Described by Tinnell – a former movie producer whose credits include *Surf Nazis Must Die* – as *All Quiet on the Western Front* meets *House of Frankenstein*, **The Black Forest** is, says Vokes, a big budget horror adventure tale. "So I told it like Universal or Hammer would, back in their prime, if they had a lot of money to play with.

"If Hell were a machine, the Black Forest would be its battery," the artist concluded cryptically.

***The Black Forest**, priced $9.95, ships in March.*

*THERE have been comics based on movies, TV series, computer games and even action figures but IDW is exploring new territory with its latest license. Its **Dracula's Revenge** is based on a boardgame from Human Head Studios. Written by the game's designer Matt Forbeck and drawn by Szymon Kudranski, a relative newcomer, the four-parter brings Abraham Van Helsing to London in search of whoever is butchering Whitechapel prostitutes and drinking their blood. But if Jack the Ripper has been off the streets for a decade and Dracula has been dead for just as long, who is behind the slayings? With cover art by Tommy Lee Edwards, the $3.99 first issue ships in April.*

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Platinum inks Unique deal to bring unpublished graphic novel to screen

Mike Conroy's Frame to Frame

Charting the latest news between films and comics

SUPERHEROES might still be making all the running in Hollywood but, while high profile masked mystery men movies generate acres of publicity in direct proportion to the size of their budgets, the film industry is continuing to search for others properties with which it can slake the cinema-going public's thirst for comics-based films.

Widening their net ever further, production companies are seeking unusual material. Among others, they have already given us *From Hell* and *American Splendor*, which garnered the Best Picture Award from the Los Angeles Film Critics Association and from America's National Society of Film Critics, which also voted it Best Screenplay.

In the pipeline is a whole slew of non-superhero projects including *Lance Barnes – Post Nuke Dick*, *Lone Wolf and Cub*, *The Way of the Rat* and *Art School Confidential*. There's also four based on series by current horror maestro Steve Niles – *30 Days of Night*, *Criminal Macabre*, *Wake the Dead* and *Hyde*, his take on **The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde**, which the writer is developing with artist Aadi Salman for publication later this year.

Snapping up unpublished titles is another Hollywood game and the latest to be grabbed is **Terminal City**'s Dean Motter and Italian artist Stefano Cardoselli's **Unique**.

Parallel Earths

One of the many titles in the still embryonic Platinum Comics line, it tells the story of Jon Geoffries, a man who discovers Earth has a twin, a parallel world in another dimension. He also learns that, while most people have counterparts on both Earths, he has no such doppelganger.

He is a 'unique,' able to travel between worlds. But there are those who want to exploit his ability.

The movie has been optioned by Touchstone Pictures. Heyday Films' David (*Harry Potter*) Heyman is to produce while Platinum Studios' Scott Mitchell Rosenberg – who brought **Men in Black** to the screen – serves as executive producer.

With *Identity*'s Michael Cooney on board to write the screenplay, Touchstone has David Goyer lined up for the director's chair.

Getting Goyer involved is a good move. He has a definite affinity for comics. The writer of **Starman** and **JSA**, he scripted all three *Blade* films and is currently directing the third. He also wrote the *Nick Fury, Agent of S.H.I.E.L.D* TV movie and the next *Batman* feature, *Intimidation*, is based on his screenplay.

Free enterprise

You have to admire the tenacity of author Rider McDowell.

He's been trying to sell a movie option on his novel, **The Mercy Man**, since it was first published in 1987. The thriller features a tough undercover cop named Willy Diaz and that was the stumbling block... The writer kept being told nobody would pay to see a film starring a Puerto Rican hero.

Undaunted, McDowell and his wife have put $1 million of their own money into getting *The Mercy Man* into development – and the first American Latino action hero onto the big screen - through their own Chapawat Pictures.

What's all that got to do with comics? Well, McDowell has teamed up with Oni's **Union Station** artist Eduardo Barretto to produce a **Mercy Man** comic and given away 100,000 copies of the resulting one-

ABOVE: The cover to Chapawat Pictures' self-published **Mercy Man** *one-shot; art by Eduardo Barreto. BELOW: Grendel by Matt Wagner. FACING PAGE: The cover to Platinum Comics'* **Unique** *graphic novel; art by Stefano Cardoselli.*

shot – which is also now available through Diamond – to publicise the movie. This is making progress, having moved into pre-production with Andy Garcia's name being linked to the project for the main role.

Let's hear it for free enterprise.

Grendel in hell

West Wing's Warner Bros-based John Wells Productions is the latest to negotiate a deal to bring Matt Wagner's **Grendel** to the screen.

Originally set up through Artisan Entertainment with a screenplay by Hans (*Man-Thing*) Rodionoff, the Dark Horse Entertainment/Arsenal Entertainment project is now being written by Carl Lund. Like that of his predecessor, the new writer's script is to focus on **Grendel: Devil's Legacy**'s Christine Spar.

Hollywood has had its hands on both *Grendel* and Wagner's *Mage* for several years but neither seems able to break out of development hell. Whether this latest move will make any difference, only time will tell.

The delays must be particularly galling to Wagner, who, although he considers *Grendel* to have franchise potential, believes the property would do better if *Mage* appeared first.

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Paul Pope: pulp hope

Novel Graphics by Paul Gravett

Highlighting the latest and best in graphic novels

"MARS ain't the kind of place to raise your kids." That's certainly true for sassy 14 year-old schoolgirl HR Watson, growing up on a clunky future Mars, where original Olmari colonials, second generation Earth immigrants and Numari bug-men live uneasily side-by-side in sprawling cities.

HR lives in the manic multi-cultural metropolis of V-City, the daughter of a celebrated Mek-builder, heir to his fortune and a vulnerable pawn in a dangerous game of politics and finance.

Before he leaves on secret business, HR's father gives her one of his most sophisticated Supermeks, a THB or Tri-Hydro-Bioxygenate, as a protector. Condensed and dormant, THB is no bigger than a marble in your pocket. Dunk him in at least six ounces of water, however, and THB erupts into a 10 foot tall, 700lb powerhouse, like a naked, pointy-headed genie; HR's every wish is his command. The only snag is that most of Mars is sand.

Above: One of Pope's music posters, reminiscent of work by '60s underground artists.

It's been ten years now since Paul Pope unveiled this ambitious, ongoing sci-fi saga. As Horse Press, Pope has self-published the whole series in chunky black and white comicbooks, 72 to 96 pages each (*www.paulpope.com*). I remember buying his opening **THB** episode complete with Go-Go checks on the cover and being won over on first reading by Pope's exuberant imagination and fluid, muscular illustration. His sequential art chops were strong and fully formed from the start, healthily influenced by Kirby, Colan and Toth but also by Europeans like Pratt, Moebius and Munoz. These were obvious in his confident debut graphic novels **Sin Titulo** and **The Ballad of Doctor Richardson**. Since these he's only got better.

True, he tends to run late with deadlines. And Pope's admitted he's had some trouble in the past coming up with stories with a beginning, middle and end. Over the decade he has promised **THB** conclusions and a collected graphic novel, but with no signs yet while most of the early issues and over-sized specials are now out of print.

Rather than grumble about this or the time he's taking to complete it, I've been relishing every fresh tangent, because on **THB** his saga and storytelling skills keep getting bigger.

For a good jumping on point, try his latest instalment, **THB** #1, Volume 2. 96 magazine-sized pages, in which Watson Senior wheeler-deals with the Olmari tribes, while HR gets into still deeper trouble with robots and bug-men, despite the pyrotechnic efforts of THB and trouble-shooter and bodyguard McHaine. You can feel the sheer fun Pope is having with this.

For heart-stopping passion and thrills I'd also recommend the first two collected chapters of Pope's circus fantasy, **Escapo**. Sporting his skintight skull-and-crossbones bodysuit like The Black Terror, escape artist and hopeless romantic Vic literally cheats death, but can

he woo the high-flying affections of trapeze performer Aerobella? Like Pope's luscious brush drawings, the emotions here bleed off the pages.

Pope has also been lucky enough to be paid for what he does best by some of the majors. First for Dark Horse he crafted a hard-boiled, Jim Thompson-style crime caper, **The One Trick Rip-Off**. Over at Oni Press, he pencilled the steamy love story *Car Crash*, split across two issues of **Oni Double Feature**. But it has been at DC Vertigo that Pope has been allowed full rein and two five-issue miniseries, now in graphic novel form.

He brings us back down to Earth for both of these stories, but still in an all-too-possible future (perhaps the same era as **THB** on Mars?), where today's excesses just got more extreme. Pope often plants unmistakeable idealisations of himself in his comics, usually as sinewy, brooding heroes. In **Heavy Liquid** we meet 'S', an ex-cop in a snakeskin outfit, trying to extricate himself from drug dealers and terrorists and find his missing former girlfriend. The results show how much Paul Pope absorbed while working for five years for Japanese publishing giant Kodansha. Here he has the pages to apply the real lessons of manga – the decompressed flow and pacing, the feel of reading in 'real time', the deeper characterisation – and delivers an enthralling, kinetic ride.

Better still is his "graphic movie" **100%**. Pope interweaves three different love stories, all revolving around employees at the Catshack nightclub. The tale kicks off like a murder mystery, when a barmaid's beaten body is found in a nearby alley and panics her colleague Kim into buying an illegal gun. Refreshingly, Pope has the killer quickly found and concentrates instead on his cast's shifting emotions. Kim opens up when she meets Eloy, an installation artist desperately applying for a grant, while struggling to hold onto his vision of one hundred boiling kettles all tuned to C Major.

Pope's closest alter ego is probably John, dishwasher and barback, whose existential malaise vanishes when he falls for the illusive Daisy. She's the club's new dancer of Gastro, the logical next step in simulated sex, permitting voyeurs to watch performers' inner workings projected live onto huge overhead screens. But John doesn't need this technology to look inside her heart, or so he thinks.

Meanwhile, it's been a year to the day since bruised boxer Haitous separated from Strel, dance manager and single Mum. She loathes his fighting but he's promised that his last bout will change their lives. Pope serves up totally convincing dialogue, internal monologues and big human emotions and proves how love and life can go on, no matter how alienating the future gets.

Not everyone has been convinced by Pope's output, but after **100%** what should be the verdict? Is he just an arthouse pin-up boy, all hype and cool? To put it bluntly, does Paul Pope shit in the woods? In a word, no. His stated goal was to create "World Comics, 21st Century comics, stories in the comic medium that can reach and speak to people everywhere." He is doing just that, 100 per cent.

Above: The slick looking cover to #6 of Paul Pope's self-published opus **THB**.

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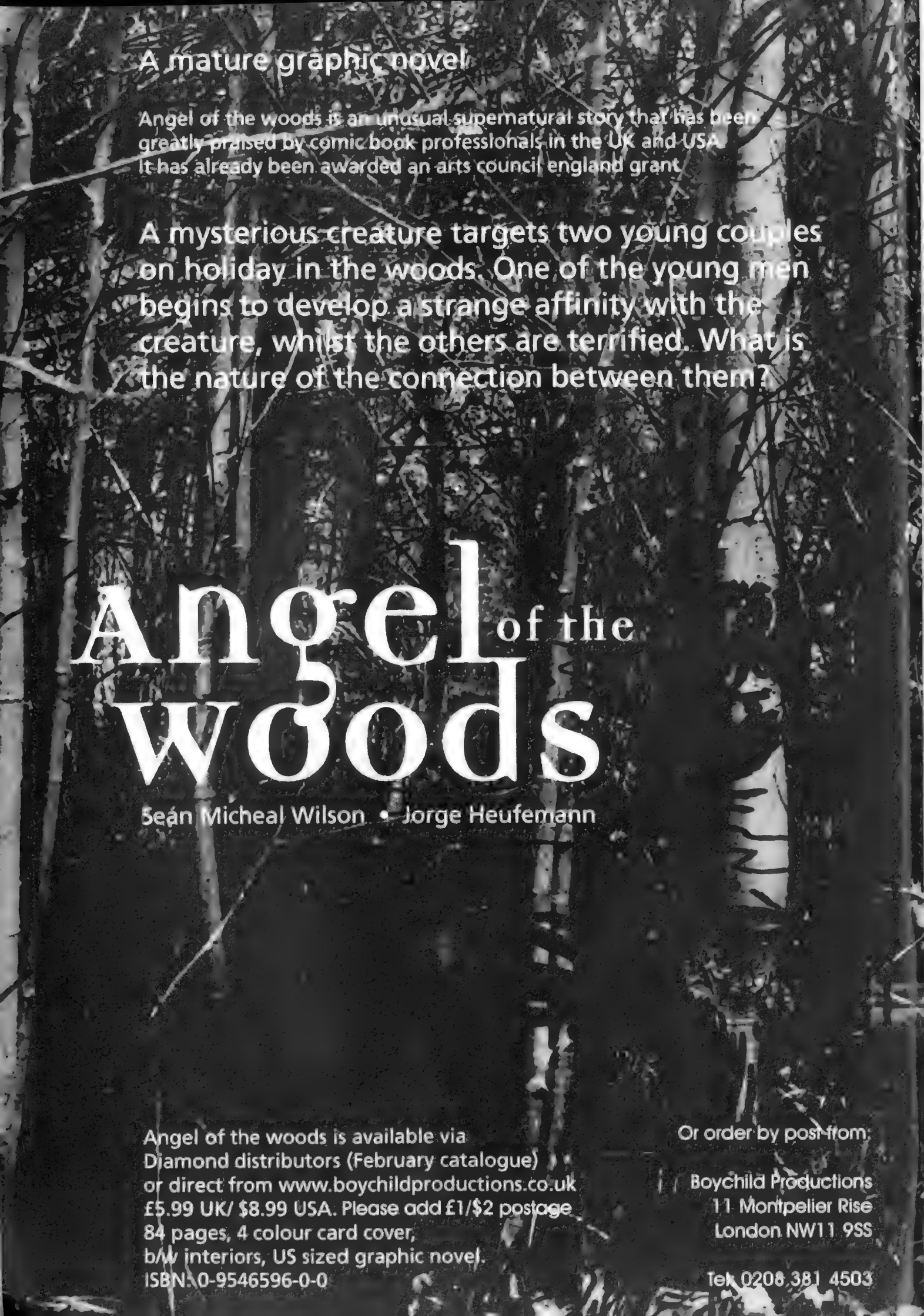
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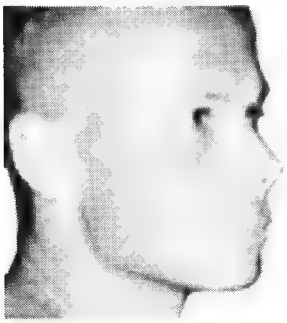

Deck the halls with cash and comics

Talking Shop with Stephen Holland

Reminding people there's a real mainstream out there

SOMETIMES the best news of the year comes during its closing moments. Especially if you're given a small house or car for Christmas.

Being less than ecclesiastically minded I'm not entirely sure of this, but can there be a better reason for Christmas coming right at the end of the year than having the ultimate party to look forward to? And I don't simply mean a gathering of like-minded idiots downing buckets of booze and turning into baboons in front of a PS2 EyeToy – though that was hilarious.

No, I also mean it in an unashamedly capitalist manner. Working in retail, it's during this season that you see all your hard work and foresight come to its wallet-lining fruition.

Nor is it just the overall sales records that are monumentally gratifying, it's seeing each purchase of a book bought with pleasure for someone else – especially if you happen to love that book yourself. And knowing that it's only because *you* stocked that book – in sufficient quantities – that the person was able to give it.

The flipside is the fear of selling out too quickly, and I'm by no means immune to that panic myself, even though it somehow never quite manages to happen.

We sold some 15 copies of Jeffrey Brown's **Clumsy** in three days, then as I scrambled to buy more in, sales suddenly ceased and everyone decided they wanted **The League of Extraordinary Gentleman Vol II** hardcover in thrice those quantities – panic reorder – oh Lord, they've now switched to **Quimby The Mouse** – no, it's **Battle Royale** – Charles Vess' **A Circle Of Cats** (yes, got those in early) – **Project Telstar** now? **Sweaterweather**? **Popgun War** (knew it would be) – g'ah! **Batman: Hush** arrives at the last moment and sells by the crate load – no, it's all those Dr. Parsons self-printed mini-comics, of course! It is, I can tell you, a heart-in-throat responsibility.

Above all, however, the biggest surprise of this Christmas has to be the least obvious: **Maus**. There's always an acceleration of its sales at this time of the year, but suddenly its publisher collects the two volumes together and – Bob's your transexual Auntie – we sell as many in the month leading up to Christmas as we have in the last three years. Unbelievable! How long has that been out there as two separate volumes? How many have already been sold? And still it goes on...

Things really are looking up for this medium and industry. Not least because comics have been splashed all over the intelligent mainstream media (did you know that **The Guardian**'s Financial Section recently referred to web-addicted old-age pensioners as Silver Surfers?), Rich Johnston is constantly popping up on Channel 5 (ttchk!) and Neil Gaiman has returned to comics. **Sandman: Endless Nights** and **Wolves In The Walls** on top of **1602** in a single sales season! Ker-ching!

> Working in retail, it's during this [Christmas] season that you see all your hard work and foresight come to its wallet-lining fruition.

Takings at Page 45, surely reflected across all other comicbook shops out there, went up by another 6.13% for this quarter (Oct-Dec 2003). And I say surely because I've just checked the **Comics & Games Retailer** charts for October and Diamond's "final orders for the top 300 comics and top 50 trade paperbacks" came in at $24.18 million.

Firstly, that was just October, and the highest previous peak during the last three years was $21 million.

Secondly, that was just Diamond, and we alone spend thousands of extra pounds a month with Red Route Distribution (with several other small distributors in the US unaccounted for).

The only odd thing for me was that of the $24.18 million turnover, those top 50 trades only accounted for $2.75m. But what a silly cut-off point – having had another look at our stock-check, it now lists over 2,600 titles! In fact, our sales chart for October-December showed that 60.26% of our income came from trade paperbacks.

My two favourite pieces of news, however, came from different sources. One was from Top Shelf – the most important new comic-book publisher in the last decade. They nearly snuffed it a year or so ago through no fault of their own, but were saved at the last moment by a brave burst of public humility and the timely intervention of a host of comic-book readers and retailers, led in no small part by the indefatigable Warren Ellis. From them we heard that Craig Thompson's **Blankets** (an absorbing auto-biography and only Craig's second graphic novel) had just won **Time** magazine's award for Best Graphic Novel/ Comic Book of the Year.

So it wasn't **Batman: Hush** after all! Nope, I bet **Time** magazine – written by real people living in the real world with a diverse bookcase – had a major problem deciding between a work that would mean so much to so many and a (fairly decent) hyped-up, sugarbuzz fight-fest meaning so much to so few.

Hell, **Blankets** even won **Wizard**'s Best Indy Publication. Though coming first in a category like that from them still amounts to little more than, "for something without costumes it wasn't too dull."

Why was this good news? Because once again it proves that the real mainstream is paying attention. Now all you have to do is wait for us retailers to catch up and... I think by now you know what I'm going to say. Stock your **Batman: Hush** absolutely, but please let us stock **Blankets** too. Because, bless **Comics International**, the collective readership of **Time** magazine, **The Guardian**, etc. constitute a far larger proportion of potential readers than my column could ever reach.

Oh, and the other best piece of news was the last-minute arrival of Nabiel Kanan's **The Drowners** #1 which reminded me that often the very best this medium has to offer is home-grown and British. My comicbook of the year, without a shadow of a doubt.

Available from all good... yeah, that's the point I've been making. Happy New Year!

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COMIX
Nice!

Stephen Holland runs Nottingham's Page 45 with Mark Simpson and Tom Rosin.

Advance Listings

READERS: You can use this Advance Listings *section as an order form with your direct market store or mail order supplier. Simply mark the items you require, copy or remove these pages (or list them on a separate piece of paper) and give it to your supplier, together with a note of your name, address and phone number to guarantee not missing any of the new titles being published. Certain suppliers may not accept standing orders, so check with them first. All prices of US titles listed are in dollars. Import prices are usually converted at a rate of $1.00 = 85p UK sterling. Shipping dates given are the earliest date product will reach stores. All dates, prices and information are assumed to be accurate as provided by publishers.*

Compiled by Jim Hannah

The following are 32 page colour titles unless stated

ON SALE FROM
MARCH 3

Dark Horse

new **BPRD: A Plague of Frogs** 1 (Mike Mignola & Guy Davis) A giant fungus escapes from its containment in a maximum-security laboratory, pitting the B.P.R.D. against the frogmen they faced 10 years ago. $2.99

one-shot **Hellboy: The Art of the Movie** (Guillermo del Toro + Mike Mignola & Wayne Barlowe + Ty Ellingson; hbk) Features del Toro's complete screenplay, based on Mignola's Hellboy: Seed of Destruction. 200pg $24.99

one-shot **Hellboy: The Corpse** (Mike Mignola) *See Close-Up, below.*

Michael Chabon Presents... The Amazing Adventures of the Escapist 2 (various) The Escapist ventures behind enemy lines in Nazi Germany to hunt down a German physicist on the verge of turning the tide of World War II! 80pg $8.95

Oh My Goddess! 106: Sora Unchained 2 (of 8; Kosuke Fujishima) With Keiichi and Belldandy cheering her on, and with a little goddess assistance, Sora's first foray into cart racing may not be the disaster everyone feared. b&w $2.99

Star Wars: Empire 19 – To the Last Man 3 (of 3; Ron Marz & Brian Ching) Having failed to locate the Rebels' new base after the destruction of the Death Star, Vader sets out to redeem himself by strong-arming his underworld contacts for information about the Alliance. $2.99

DC Comics

The Authority 10 (Robbie Morrison & Dwayne Turner + Sal Regla; *WildStorm)* The American military stands defeated. The American government is in shambles. The Authority is finally applying their notions of a finer world on United States soil. So what do they do now? Mature readers. $2.95

Batman: City of Light 6 (of 8; The Pander Brothers + Mark Paniccia & Panders + Alvaro Lopez) Allen and Montoya search vainly for Angela in the insane expanse of Tower One and Batman disappears into the primordial abyss of his own soul. $2.95

one-shot **Batman in the Forties** (various; tpbk) Featuring stories from Batman #7, #15, #20, #31, #37, #47-49, Detective Comics #27, #33, #38, #49, #80, Real Fact Comics #5, Star-Spangled Comics #70, and World's Finest Comics #30. 192pg $19.95

Detective Comics 792 *(The Surrogate* 2 of 3; Andersen Gabrych + A.J. Lieberman & various) Batman searches for the missing Leslie Thompkins and a comatose pregnant girl held in protective captivity by a record executive and his pop-star wife. 40pg $2.75

Fables 23 (Bill Willingham & Mark Buckingham + Steve Leialoha; *Vertigo)* Boy Blue nurses a broken heart, Prince Charming recruits more Fables for his mayoral campaign, and Bigby and Snow team up to get to the bottom of Red Riding Hood's story. Mature readers. .. $2.50

one-shot **Formerly Known as the Justice League** (Keith Giffen + J.M. Dematteis & Kevin Maguire + Joe Rubinstein; tpbk) The heroes are convinced by Maxwell Lord to become a team for hire, but no sooner do they re-form than they're captured by Roulette. 144pg $12.95

Hard Time 2 (Steve Gerber & Brian Hurtt) It's Day One of a 50-year prison sentence for 15-year old Ethan Harrow. In the span of 24 terrifying hours, he'll learn the rules of survival from a man he can't trust, land on the wrong side of a clique of skinheads, and lash out with great power. $2.50

Justice League Adventures 29 (Matt Howarth & Aluir Amancio + Rob Leigh) Seattle and Tokyo are under siege by a mysterious menace! Buildings and people are physically merged together, simultaneously coexisting in the same space. $2.25

Looney Tunes 112 (Sam Agro + Bill Matheny & various) The Goofy Gophers battle Elmer Fudd; Foghorn Leghorn tries out extreme sports; and Daffy's unwanted junk mail chases him all the way to the moon! $2.25

MAD Magazine 440 (The Usual Gang of Idiots) Celebrate the dawn of a new season with the some MAD humour 48pg $3.50

The Monolith 2 (Jimmy Palmiotti + Justin Gray & Phil Winslade) An indestructible force that has been kept imprisoned for almost seven decades becomes the responsibility of a woman who can barely take care of herself. $2.95

My Faith in Frankie 3 (of 4; Mike Carey & Sonny Liew + Marc Hempel; *Vertigo)* The fight to reclaim Frankie's faith – not to mention her heart and soul – continues. Mature readers. $2.95

Plastic Man 4 (Kyle Baker) The wrap-up of the *Eel O'Brien on the Lam* saga. $2.95

Robotech: Invasion 3 (of 5; Jay Faerber + Ken Siu-Chong & Takeshi Miyazawa + Omar Dogan; *WildStorm)* Lancer must face a very human enemy who's aiding the mysterious Invid race, while struggling to protect Carla, the new woman in his life. $2.95

The Sandman Presents: Thessaly – Witch For Hire 2 (of 4, Bill Willingham & Shawn McManus; *Vertigo)* Now that Thessaly has Fetch right where she wants him – trapped in a mirror and at her mercy – he's quite possibly the most annoying captive ever. Mature readers. $2.95

Shazam! Archives Vol 4 (various; tpbk) Collecting the Captain Marvel Adventures #4-5, Master Comics #21-22, Whiz #25 and America's Greatest Comics #2. 196pg $49.95

Superman: Birthright 8 (of 12; Mark Waid & Leinil Yu + Gerry Alanguilan) The startling truth behind Lex Luthor and his time in Smallville is revealed! Witness young Lex Luthor and find out why his youth has been kept a secret until now. $2.95

new **Swamp Thing** 1 (Andy Diggle & Enriqué Breccia; *Vertigo)* The original Swamp Thing is back, and nothing will ever be the same. Mature. .. $2.95

Y: The Last Man 20 *(Safeword* 3 of 3; Brian K. Vaughan & Pia Guerra + José Marzan Jr; *Vertigo)* What really happened to Yorick Brown in the first days after the Plague killed every other male on earth? Mature readers. $2.95

Marvel

new **Alpha Flight** 1 (Scott Lobdell & Clayton Henry) The Canadian superteam returns in a shocking new series that will be the talk of Saskatchewan. $2.99

one-shot **Avengers/ Thunderbolts Vol 1: The Nefaria Protocols** (Kurt Busiek + Fabian Nicieza & George Pérez + Mark Bagley) The T-Bolts and Earth's Mightiest Heroes stand side-by-side against Count Nefaria, master of ionic energy! Collects Avengers #31-34 and Thunderbolts #42-44. 184pg $19.99

new **Captain America & The Falcon** 1 (Priest & Bart Sears) Sam Wilson has gone rogue and SHIELD has given Cap 24 hours to get him. $2.99

Exiles 44 *(A Blink in Time* 2 of 3; Chuck Austen & Jim Calafiore) Blink is back, but is her return enough to tip the scales in the Exiles' battle with a startling new menace? $2.99

Marvel Encyclopedia Vol 5: Marvel Knights (various; hbk) Guardian devils, vengeance-seeking vigilantes and enigmatic assassins stalk the city's dark underbelly, and the urban action unfolds with gritty intensity. 240pg $29.99

new **Punisher: The Movie** 1 (of 3; Peter Milligan & Pat Olliffe) The official comicbook adaptation of the latest big-screen offering, starring John Travolta, Rebecca Romijn-Stamos and Thomas Jane as Frank Castle. ... $2.99

Spider-Girl 71 (Tom Defalco & Ron Frenz) Spider-Girl fights to prevent NYC from being attacked by an army of invisible invaders. $2.99

Spider-Man Unlimited 2 (Adam Higgs + J.T. Krul & Rick Mays + Paul Azaceta) More shorter-length stories featuring the Amazing Spider-Man and members of his all-star supporting cast. $2.99

Supreme Power 8 (J. Michael Straczynski & Gary Frank; *Max Comics)* Until now, Hyperion didn't know of Dr Spectrum's existence. $2.99

one-shot **Supreme Power Vol 1: The Hyperion Project** TPB (J. Michael Straczynski & Gary Frank) Following the origins of these new heroes and antiheroes – including Dr Spectrum, Nighthawk and the Blur – from their birth to adulthood. Collects Supreme Power #1-6. 144pg $14.99

Thanos 7 (Keith Giffen & Ron Lim) At the outer boundary of our universe – the very edge of existence – Thanos has a fateful encounter with his lost love, Death, which causes him to re-evaluate his goals and his approach to attaining them. $2.99

Thor 75 *(Gods & Men* 1 of 5; Dan Jurgens) The action heats up and the heavens tremble as all the Thunder God has built comes to ruins – and those closest to Thor betray him! $2.99

Ultimate Spider-Man 54 *(Spider-Man: The Movie* 1 of 5; Brian Michael Bendis & Mark Bagley) A major movie studio is making an unauthorised summer blockbuster about Spider-Man, and the Ultimate wall-crawler swings by the set to give the producers a piece of his mind. $2.25

Uncanny X-Men 441 *(She Lies with Angels* 5 of 5; Chuck Austen & Salvador Larroca) Two young lovers, a human and a mutant, are caught in a bitter feud between their warring families. . $2.25

close-up

Hellboy: The Corpse

Dark Horse

Writer/Artist: Mike Mignola

While in Ireland, Hellboy helps a family whose baby has been taken by faeries. The thieves demand Hellboy buries their dead friend, a drunken gambler, in hallowed ground. But in the world of Hellboy nothing is ever as easy as it sounds. This volume is complemented by behind-the-scenes photography from the film sequence inspired by this story. 40pg $0.25

ON SALE MARCH 3

ON SALE FROM
MARCH 10

Dark Horse

one-shot **Lmegatokyo** Vol 1 (Fred Gallagher & Rodney Caston; tpbk) Contains all of the comics from Chapter 0 as well as the running editorial comments featured in the original release. 152pg b&w .. $9.95

Tales of the Vampires 4 (Joss Whedon & Alex Sanchez + Ben Edlund) A group of precocious young Watchers is schooled on the mysteries and treacheries of vampires. $2.99

DC Comics

100 Bullets 49 *(In Stinked* 3 of 3; Brian Azzarello & Eduardo Risso; *Vertigo)* Jack the Junkie finds himself stuck between an angry tiger and a trio of even angrier mobsters, and only one of them is getting out of Jungle Garvey's Wild Animal Park alive. Mature readers. $2.50

Action Comics 813 *(Godfall* 4 of 6; various) Kal-El has begun a new life on Krypton – now meet the new woman in his life! $2.25

Batman: Death and the Maidens 8 (of 9; Greg Rucka & Klaus Janson) Batman has no choice but to give his greatest nemesis the location of a restorative Lazarus Pit, but that doesn't mean he's going to let Ra's walk free. $2.95

Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight 177 *(Lost Cargo* 1 of 2; Devin Grayson & Jean-Jacques Dzialowski) Catwoman is trying to crush a human slave trade run by the Lucky Hand Triad in Gotham City, but her timing couldn't be worse. $2.50

new **Cartoon Cartoons Vol 1: Name That Toon!** (various; tpbk) Collects 110 pages of stories from Cartoon Cartoons, Dexter's Laboratory and Cartoon Network Starring. 112pg $6.95

Cartoon Cartoons Vol 2: The Gang's All Here! (various) Featuring all the favourite cartoon characters, including Johnny Bravo, Cow & Chicken, Courage the Cowardly Dog, Ed, Edd n Eddy, I.M. Weasel, and more. 112pg $6.95

one-shot **Coup D'État Afterword** (various; *WildStorm)* As the dust settles from last month's Coup D'État crossover, here's a primer for where things stand in the WildStorm Universe. Mature readers $2.95

Fallen Angel 9 (Peter David & David Lopez + Fernando Blanco) After being beaten to a pulp, Black Mariah tells the Angel where a mysterious religious object is hidden away. Mature... $2.50

Gotham Central 17 (Greg Rucka & Greg Scott) The pain and anguish over the losses incurred at the hands of the Joker still linger, but the detectives have a job to do. $2.50

Green Arrow 36 *(City Walls* 3 of 5; Judd Winick & Phil Hester + Ande Parks) The Riddler is holding Star City for ransom – to the tune of 25 million dollars! .. $2.50

one-shot **Hellblazer: Son of Man** (Garth Ennis & John Higgins; *Vertigo;* tpbk) Collecting Hellblazer #129-133. John Constantine's pulled a lot of shady stunts over the years, but perhaps none as bad as the time he resurrected organised crime boss Harry Cooper's five year-old son, Ronnie. Now, 15 years later, he's got to deal with the ungodly consequences. Mature. 128pg $12.95

H-E-R-O 14 *(Ch-Ch-Ch-Changes* 3 of 3; Will Pfeifer & Leonard Kirk + Wade Von Grawbadger) Still stuck in the body of beautiful, buxom Electro Lass, Joe Miller gets more and more desperate to find the H-E-R-O device and change back into his normal, male self. $2.50

JLA 94 (John Byrne + Chris Claremont & Byrne + Jerry Ordway) The JLA investigates a rash of child disappearances – but start to go missing themselves! And who is that mysterious group that seems to be watching their every move? $2.25

JSA 59 (Geoff Johns & Sean Phillips) Degaton returns to the lives of the JSA, interrupting their recovery from the events of the last few months. But what does Degaton want? And what does he have that another JSA member desperately needs? $2.50

Mad Colour Special 9 (The Usual Gang of Idiots) Contains the Best of the Web, MAD Marginals XL, featured Writer of the Month, more Readers' Choice picks, and other fun features 48pg $3.99

Nightwing 91 (Devin Grayson & Patrick Zircher + Andy Owens) Blockbuster has thrown every assassin and cutthroat he could at Nightwing. Now, he's bringing in his biggest gun: Shrike! $2.25

one-shot **Reload/Mek** (Warren Ellis & various; *WildStorm)* Collects two miniseries from Warren Ellis. Reload is an espionage thriller that tells the story of Secret Service Agent Chris Royal and his mad scramble to find the woman who assassinated the US President. Mek is a tale of revenge set in a not-too-distant feature, where robotic enhancement has become the latest trend. Mature readers. 144pg .. $14.95

Stormwatch: Team Achilles 20 (Micah Ian Wright & C.P. Smith + Eric Nguyen; *WildStorm)* Santini and his crew are cast adrift, forcing them to look for new sources of income and political legitimacy. Mature. $2.95

Marvel

4 #3 *(Wolf at the Door* 3 of 4; Roberto Aguirre-Sacasa & Steve McNiven) Metal-faced despots, intergalactic deities, and subterranean savages couldn't destroy the FF, but will Marvel's first family be torn apart by the most human threat it's ever faced? $2.99

Avengers Vol 3: The Search For She-Hulk (Geoff Johns & Scott Kolins + Steve Sadowski; tpbk) Her transformations into the She-Hulk out of control, long-time Avenger Jennifer Walters seeks the one person on Earth who can help – her cousin Bruce Banner. Collects Avengers #71-76. 144pg $12.99

new **Avengers/Thunderbolts** 1 (of 6; Kurt Busiek & Fabian Nicieza + Barry Kitson) The villains-turned-would-be-heroes known as the Thunderbolts are back! But which side of the law are they on this time? $2.99

Captain America 24 (Homeland 4 of 5; Robert Morales & Chris Bachalo) Cap races against time to hunt down a group of deadly, escaped prisoners from Guantanamo Bay – and prevent a terrorist attack against Cuba! $2.99

Emma Frost 9 *(Mind Games* 3 of 6; Karl Bollers & Carlo Pagulayan) On her own for the very first time, Emma's found love, but she's also found out that her new boyfriend is in deep with the Boston mob! $2.99

Incredible Hulk 68 *(Bury Me Not* 3 of 4; Bruce Jones & Doug Braithwaite) There's something big and weird and downright nasty out there in the desert, and it wants everything Bruce Banner has. $2.25

Incredible Hulk Vol 6: Split Decisions (Bruce Jones & Mike Deodato Jr; tpbk) Still caught in a relentless conspiracy to capture him by a mysterious clandestine organisation, the indomitable Hulk faces off against a new array of powerful abominations. Collects Incredible Hulk #60-65. 144pg $12.99

new **Iron Fist** 1 (Jim Mullaney & Kevin Lau) In the space of a single moment, the life of the master martial artist known as Iron Fist will be shattered beyond repair – as a dark legend from the musty scrolls of ancient K'un Lun begins to take shape in the mortal world. $2.99

Iron Man 78 (John Jackson Miller & Jorge Lucas) Washington is under terrorist attack – or is it? Tony Stark's had his chance – can his armoured alter ego prevent a tragedy? ... $2.99

Marvel Masterworks: The Uncanny X-Men Vol 3 (Chris Claremont & John Byrne) Hated and feared by a world they are sworn to protect, the X-Men face off against some of their most unforgettable foes. Collects X-Men Vol 1 #111-121. 208pg . $39.99

Punisher: The Movie 2 (of 3; Peter Milligan & Pat Olliffe) The official comic book adaptation of the latest big-screen offering, starring John Travolta, Rebecca Romijn-Stamos and Thomas Jane as Frank Castle. $2.99

new **She-Hulk** 1 (Dan Slott & Juan Bobillo) Single Green Female – outgoing, physically fit, intelligent, great sense of humour. Enjoys clubbing, dishing with gal-pals, and saving the universe. Ready to put old issues behind and make a fresh start. Contact Jen W. at Avengers Mansion. $2.99

Spectacular Spider-Man 11 *(The Lizard's Tale* 1 of 3; Paul Jenkins & Damion Scott) He's struggled for years to control the coiled reptile that dwells deep within his heart. But now, at the end of his rope, one bad day will change Dr Curt Connors' life forever. $2.25

Spectacular Spider-Man Vol 2: Countdown (Paul Jenkins & Humberto Ramos; tpbk) Spidey's arch-foe Doctor Octopus is sporting an updated new look and a new plan to ruin the wall-crawler's life once and for all. Collects Spectacular Spider-Man #6-10. 120pg $11.99

new **Thor: Son of Asgard** 1 (of 6; Akira Yoshida & Greg Tocchini) In a saga of courage, adversity, revenge and brotherhood, Thor faces perils that will challenge his mettle as a young warrior, and trials that will test and temper his immortal spirit. $2.99

Ultimate X-Men 43 *(New Mutants* 4 of 6; Brian Michael Bendis & David Finch) The President's advisors believe he's being secretly controlled by Professor Xavier and a plan is hatched to free the Chief Executive from his mutant influence. $2.25

ON SALE FROM

MARCH 17

Dark Horse

Hellsing Vol 2 (Kohta Hirano; tpbk) Follows the Hellsing Organisation, an old institution created by English royalty to squash the ghoulish undead of the world, as they face an insurgence of murderous monsters running rampant across the isles. 180pg b&w ... $13.95

one-shot **Michael Chabon Presents The Amazing Adventures of the Escapist** Vol 1 (Michael Chabon & Howard Chaykin + various; tpbk) Operating from a secret headquarters, the Escapist and his crack team of associates roam the globe performing amazing feats of magic and coming to the aid of all those who languish in the chains of oppression. 152pg $17.95

Shadow Star Volume 5: A Flower's Fragrance (Mihori Kitoh; tpbk) Shiina and Akira are typical introverted teenagers in every way, save one – their bonding with cute extraterrestrial creatures, part of a growing number of alien entities known as the fearsome Shadow Dragons, all of whom have linked with Earthling youths. 208pg b&w $15.95

Star Wars: Republic 63 (John Ostrander & Jan Duursema + Dan Parsons) Jedi Quinlan Vos has taken a fateful step that may plunge him so far into darkness that he can never recover. $2.99

one-shot **Steve Rude's The Moth Double-Sized Special** (Steve Rude & Gary Martin) The Moth, who is living with a touring circus troop, finds himself in a battle for his very life, against a savage creature known as the Lionman of Botswana. 56pg $4.95

DC Comics

Adventures of Superman 626 (various) The penultimate chapter of the *Godfall* saga finds Kal-El pursued by the law and allied with former enemies! $2.25

Aquaman 16 (Will Pfeifer & Patrick Gleason + Christian Alamy) Reeling from the shock of seeing half of San Diego

Illuminations

Highlights from March's releases

Selected by Martin "Biff" Averre

DC is starting the year gently, putting its main efforts so far into gearing up the popularity of Superman and Batman within their ongoing series, a move I applaud. Sales of **Superman/Batman** have been strong anyway, but the addition of Michael Turner for 6 issues (from #8) will guarantee continued high if not higher sales. Within the Superman monthlies DC is gearing up sales and quality with the *Godfall* storyline – a lead in to the arrival of Jim Lee, sure to have a massive affect on sales. But I do question DC's 'Focus' line, which, I believe, will have little or no impact. So, **Kinetic** #1? Maybe 6 issues.

DC Vertigo's only new release is **Swamp Thing**. The original series lasted 171 issues, but over its last few years it struggled by. Horror needs two things, a public interest (which there is at present) and a writer with a twisted and febrile mind, which (no insult intended) Andy Diggle has. Couple this with some atmospheric art by Enrique Breccia and I think Vertigo has its strongest release for over a year. **Sales 5/5 Quality 5/5**

Image Central has in its wisdom or desperation decided to re-launch **Powers** with Vol.2 #1. This is the company's strongest selling title anyway and hardly needs the re-launch. However, there is a large number of Bendis fans from his newer Marvel work who might not try this series if they cannot be indulged with a first issue. This is a fabulous series anyway and it will achieve higher sales for the next few months with a re-launch, so who am I to pour on cold water? Rack this with the Ultimate line and watch the copies fly from the shelves. **Sales 5/5 Quality 5/5**

There aren't many of them, but Marvel own a few characters (so far) that should have never been created as they never seem to work with any creative team, She Hulk being one. John Byrne gave us the campy, **Sensational** talking-to-the-reader style which, for me, never worked, but limped on the longest, for 60 issues. Now Marvel has given a relaunch to Dan Slott (scripts) and Juan Bobillo (art) and my best comment is, "Why and who?". **Sales 2/5 Quality 2/5**

A worthy title is **Captain America and The Falcon**. These two characters are the perfect foil for each other, representing distinctly different aspects of US society, which sometimes causes great friction, but they have the greatest of respect for each other. Handled well, as in the **Captain America** run from #133 to 150, they provide the source of many an exciting story. There is a wealth of history for Chris Priest (scripts) and Bart Sears (art) to produce some of their finest work yet. This is a series with great potential and a cracking creative crew. **Sales 4/5 Quality 5/5**

Marvel has three other new ongoing series: **Iron Fist**, **Alpha Flight** – the art on which looks so cartoony for action/adventure that Scott Lobdell is doomed to failure if he cannot secure a better artist – and **Cable & Deadpool** which was originally slated for a November 2003 release and my comments from then still hold true. One comic mutant anti-hero plus one serious mutant anti-hero equals a medium life. **Sales 3/5 Quality 4/5**

Iron Fist holds the most potential for sales and interesting stories, crossing as it does the boundaries of kung fu action, mystery adventure and sorcery. The original 15 issue series ran from 1975 to 1977 after springing from **Marvel Premiere** #15-25 with several minis since, but none have done the character any good whatsoever. I hope that Jim Mullaney (scripts) and Kevin Lau (art) can tap the wealth of potential this series holds. **Sales 4/5 Quality 5/5**

With 22 years of comic retail experience as Ace Comics, Biff has also produced his ***Illuminations*** *monthly fanzine for 19 years before moving it to the web.*

plunge into the Pacific Ocean, Aquaman is stunned when a young woman stumbles out of the surf, still alive after days underwater. $2.50

Batman Adventures 12 (Ty Templeton + Dan Slott & Rick Burchett + Terry Beatty) The Riddler's been badly wounded – but by whom? Everyone wants to know, especially the Penguin, whose job as Gotham's mayor could depend on it! $2.25

Batman: Gotham Knights 51 (A.J. Lieberman & Al Barrionuevo + Francis Portela) A desperate Riddler contacts the only man who might save him from Hush's wrath: The Joker. 40pg .. $2.75

DC: The New Frontier 3 (of 6; Darwyn Cooke) Revisit the dawn of the Silver Age as the Challengers of the Unknown are assembled in response to a mysterious evil. 64pg $6.95

Elfquest: The Grand Quest Vol 2 (Wendy + Richard Pini & Wendy Pini) Collects ElfQuest #5-9. Cutter's tribe has happily melded with the Sun Village, but the elf chieftain still has a ways to go with Leetah, the beautiful healer. 224pg b&w $9.95

Kamikaze 6 (of 6; various; *WildStorm)* The gang travels to Oaxaca to find the final piece to the Kamikaze puzzle, unaware that the FBI has sent a team there as well. $2.95

Lobo Unbound 6 (of 6; Keith Giffen & Alex Horley + Bill Wray) Lobo starts a world war, and likes it. But all the plunder of the solid-gold planet Dhabba Dhu can't protect him from the Moyl Men! Mature readers. $2.95

Lucifer 48 *(Stitchglass Slide* 3 of 4; Mike Carey & Peter Gross + Ryan Kelly; *Vertigo)* Thole's little love nest did the trick – but the mate he's attracted is a fanged horror who sees the human boy Martin as no more than finger food. Mature readers. $2.50

one-shot **Planetary: Crossing Worlds** (Warren Ellis & various; *WildStorm)* This volume collects Planetary/The Authority, Planetary/JLA, and Planetary/Batman, featuring & John Cassaday, Phil Jimenez and Jerry Ordway. 160pg $14.95

Robin 124 (Bill Willingham & Francisco Rodriguez De La Fuente + Aaron Sowd) As Robin continues to juggle his girlfriend Spoiler, a mess of schoolwork and an intensive training regimen, his greatest fear threatens to come to fruition! $2.25

Rose & Thorn 4 (of 6; Gail Simone & Adriana Melo + Dan Green) Thorn stalks the streets of Metropolis on a rampage of revenge against the crime-family known as The 100 – and anyone else who gets in her way! $2.95

Scooby-Doo 82 (Alex Simmons + Ivan Velez Jr & various) The Mystery Inc gang gets assistance from spunky young ghost-hunter Gretta Ghoule in the case of a frighteningly realistic haunting! ... $2.25

Smallville 7 (Clint Carpenter & various) Chloe reopens her secret files after gaining information from a fugitive member of Lionel Luthor's Deletion Force, and her investigation leads to new secrets concerning Kryptonite! 48pg $3.95

Superman: Secret Identity 3 (of 4; Kurt Busiek & Stuart Immonen) Pursued by agents of his own country who want to draft him into service, Clark has one overriding concern beyond his own freedom: The safety and security of his wife and children! 48pg $5.95

Teen Titans 9 *(Raven Rising* 1 of 5; Geoff Johns & Mike Mckone + Marlo Alquiza) Another weekend begins for the Teen Titans, and the first thing on the agenda: teach Bart Allen to drive. $2.50

Wonder Woman 202 (Greg Rucka & Stephen Sadowski + Andrew Currie) Veronica Cale had a plan to discredit Wonder Woman, but was betrayed. Now Cale is going to close the leak. ... $2.25

one-shot **Y: The Last Man – One Small Step** (Brian K. Vaughan & Pia Guerra + José Marzán, Jr; *Vertigo,* tpbk) Collecting issues #11-17 of the series. A Russian Soyuz capsule is coming down from the International Space Station carrying three passengers: one woman and two men. Could this be the end of Yorick's tenure as last living male? Mature readers. 168pg $12.95

Marvel

Amazing Spider-Man 505 (J. Michael Straczynski & John Romita Jr.) Peter delves further into the mysterious totemistic origin of his powers when the enigmatic Ezekiel returns! $2.25

Captain Marvel 21 *(Odyssey* 3 of 6; Peter David & Aaron Lopresti) The Shi'ar, the Skrulls, and the Kree have faced many great obstacles in their conquest of the future Earth, but even they're not prepared for the attack of the giant Captain Marvel. $2.99

Captain Marvel Vol 3: Crazy Like a Fox (Peter David & Michael Ryan + Paul Azaceta; tpbk) The complications continue to pile up for Captain Marvel as the return of his mother and the arrival of a new female Captain Marvel force Genis to re-evaluate his life and role in the universe. Collects Captain Marvel #13-18. 144pg $14.99

Daredevil 58 (Brian Michael Bendis & Alex Maleev) Matt Murdock is missing after his battle with 100 armed men, and only Ben Urich can find him. $2.99

Daredevil Vol 8: Echo – Vision Quest (David Mack; tpbk) Maya Lopez –a deaf young woman capable of assimilating an individual's fighting style by sight and who nearly took down Daredevil – makes her return. Collects Daredevil #51-55 120pg $13.99

Elektra 34 (Robert Rodi & Steven Cummings) Elektra must slice and dice her way through a slew of Russian mobsters while fighting off the mother of all Asian flu viruses. $2.99

Fantastic Four 511 *(Hereafter* 3 of 3; Mark Waid & Mike Wieringo) They've faced the destroyer of everything – Galactus. Now they face the Creator of everything, as the Fantastic Four are reunited. $2.25

Fantastic Four Vol 3: Authoritative Action (Mark Waid & Howard Porter) Now their arch enemy Doctor Doom has seemingly perished, the Fantastic Four journey into his nation of Latveria, disassemble its war machine and set its oppressed citizens free. Well, that's the plan. Collects Fantastic Four #503-508 144pg $12.99

Hawkeye 6 *(The High, Hard Shaft* 6 of 6; Fabian Nicieza & Stefano Raffaele) The secret of the Unity stands revealed as Clint throws down against 99 archers out to protect a secret that could change the world – a secret that Hawkeye must possess! $2.99

Marvel Masterworks: The Fantastic Four Vol 6 (Stan Lee & Jack Kirby) Presents an all-out battle between the Thing and the Silver Surfer, the original Human Torch vs Johnny Storm, and the four-part saga in which the dreaded Dr Doom steals the Surfer's cosmic power. Collects Fantastic Four Vol 1 #51-60, Annual 4. 240pg . $49.99

New Mutants 12 (Christina Weir & Nunzio Defilippis + Carlo Barberi) The mysterious homeless girl seen around Salem Centre turns out to be a powerful mutant – but convincing her to come to the Xavier Institute could be a dangerous task! $2.99

New X-Men 154 (Grant Morrison & Marc Silvestri) Morrison and Silvestri's saga about the X-Men of the future comes to a conclusion. What ramifications will this have on the X-Men of today? $2.25

The Pulse 2 (Brian Michael Bendis & Mark Bagley) Pooling their resources, the Daily Bugle's new team of superhero investigative journalists – Jessica Jones & Ben Urich – are pulled into a mystery that hits close to home. $2.99

Punisher: The Movie 3 (of 3; Peter Milligan & Pat Olliffe) The official comic book adaptation of the latest big-screen offering, starring John Travolta, Rebecca Romijn-Stamos and Thomas Jane as Frank Castle. $2.99

one-shot **Punisher: The Movie** (Peter Milligan & Pat Olliffe) The comicbook of Marvel's movie starring John Travolta, Thomas Jane and Rebecca Romijn-Stamos. Collects Punisher: The Movie Adaptation #1-3, Amazing Spider-Man 129, Punisher Vol 3 #1. 128pg .. $12.99

Runaways 13 *(The Good Die Young* 1 of 2; Brian K. Vaughan & Adrian Alphona) The world as we know it is about to end, and the Runaways are the only hope to prevent it! $2.99

Thanos 8 (Keith Giffen & Ron Lim) At the outer boundary of our universe – the very edge of existence – Thanos has a fateful encounter with his lost love, Death, which causes him to re-evaluate his goals and his approach to attaining them. ... $2.99

Thor 76 *(Gods & Men* 2 of 5; Dan Jurgens) The action heats up and the heavens tremble as all the Thunder God has built comes to ruins – and those closest to Thor betray him! $2.99

Ultimate Spider-Man 55 *(Spider-Man: The Movie* 2 of 5; Brian Michael Bendis & Mark Bagley) A major movie studio is making an unauthorised summer blockbuster about Spider-Man, and the Ultimate wall-crawler swings by the set to give the producers a piece of his mind. $2.25

Wolverine 12 (Greg Rucka & Darick Robertson) What exactly is Jean Grey doing to Logan in the woods? You're invited on a very special all-access tour through the most dangerous mind on the planet to witness moments that X-Men fans thought they'd truly never see. $2.25

Wolverine Legends Vol 6: Marc Silvestri Book I (Larry Hama & Marc Silvestri; tpbk) New collected edition of some of Silvestri's best Wolverine stories. Collects Wolverine #31-34, #41-42, #48-50. 216pg $19.99

ON SALE FROM

MARCH24

Dark Horse

one-shot **The Art of Hellboy** (Mike Mignola; tpbk) This 200-page tome looks at the evolution of Mike Mignola's art over 10 years on his award-winning comics series. 200pg $29.95

one-shot **Buffy the Vampire Slayer: Stake to the Heart** (Fabian Nicieza & various) Buffy Summers has faced vampires, demons, and monsters, but now she must face there scariest thing of all: the divorce of her parents. 96pg $12.95

Conan 2 (Kurt Busiek & Cary Nord + Dave Stewart) In the wake of a bloody massacre, Conan comes face to face with the ultimate vision of beauty, an irresistible spirit of the northern wastes. $2.99

Freaks of the Heartland 2 (Steve Niles & Greg Ruth) A young boy named Will (note: Will, young) must try to keep his younger brother from falling victim to the worst fears of a troubled town that can't begin to understand the tragic secret that binds its families together. .. $2.99

DC Comics

one-shot **The Authority: Harsh Realities** (Robbie Morrison & various; tpbk) *See Close-Up, below.*

Batgirl 50 (Dylan Horrocks & Rick Leonardi + Jesse Delperdang) For months, Batgirl's feelings of resentment toward Batman have risen from simmer to boil. Now, fuelled by the emotion-charging drug Soul, Batgirl explodes in a fury of fists and feet. 40pg $3.25

Birds of Prey 65 (Gail Simone & Ed Benes + Alex Lei) A reluctant Canary is forced to partner with the deadly assassin Cheshire to hunt a group of dangerous and powerful men with a terrible secret – leaving only the Huntress to free Oracle from her imprisonment! $2.50

Caper 6 (of 12; Judd Winick & John Severin) John Hawks and Debbie Ashley were Hollywood royalty, the brightest stars imaginable – until Debbie was brutally murdered and John became the lone suspect. Now, Ann Weiss – their neighbour, lawyer and best friend – is the only thing standing between John and the death penalty. Mature. .. $2.95

one-shot **Green Arrow: Straight Shooter** (Judd Winick & Phil Hester + Ande Parks; tpbk) Collecting Green Arrow #26-31. When Green Arrow discovers corporate corruption in Star City, he goes after those responsible. 144pg $12.95

Hawkman 26 (Josh Siegal & John Byrne + Lary Stucker) St Roch is drenched in blood. But when a pack of rabid vampires wage a violent war against Hawkman, is the past coming back to haunt the winged hero yet again? Or is the past the only thing that will save him? $2.50

Human Target 8 *(Which Way the Wind Blows* 2 of 3; Peter Milligan & Cliff Chiang; *Vertigo)* It's been over 30 years since anyone's seen American terrorist James Malloy. He could look like anyone – including Christopher Chance. That's what Charlie Rivers thinks, and he already has Chance lined up in his crosshairs. Mature readers. $2.95

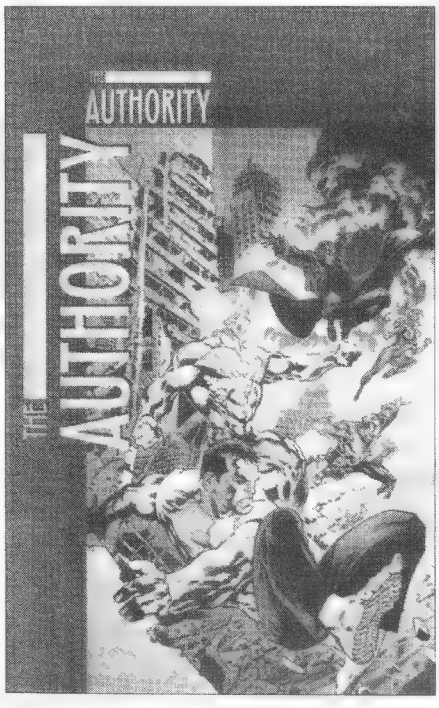
one-shot **JSA: The Liberty Files** (Dan Jolley + Tony Harris & Harris + Ray Snyder; tpbk) Collecting the JSA: The Liberty Files miniseries as well as the follow-up, JSA: The Unholy Three. In 1942, the Owl, Clock, Bat, and a host of other very familiar costumed characters battle for the safety of the world! 264pg $19.95

new **Kinetic** 1 (Kelley Puckett & Warren Pleece) A disabled kid with an overprotective mother has one escape: the comicbook exploits of his favourite character, Kinetic. . $2.50

The Losers 10 *(Island Life* 2 of 5; Andy Diggle & Jock; *Vertigo)* Time is running out as the Losers race to uncover Max's secret operation on the Caribbean isle of Montserrat. Mature readers. $2.95

Outsiders 10 (Judd Winick & Tom Raney + Sean Parsons) The Outsiders have their hands full duking it out with demon hordes – and Captain Marvel Jr shows up to face an old foe! $2.50

The Powerpuff Girls 48 (various) Star-struck Sedusa turns Townsville into a reality TV show! Plus, it's pandemonium when Mojo Jojo's yard sale arms Townsville to the teeth! $2.25



close-up

The Authority: Harsh Realities

DC/WildStorm

Writer: Robbie Morrison

Artists: various

Reprinting The Authority Vol 2 #0-5. Our heroes go through their most fiendish adventures yet. From a rogue vice dimension bent on destroying the planet as part of an elaborate gamble to an interdimensional corporation that has been strip-mining other realities for almost a century, The Authority have their hands full like never before. Mature readers. 144pg $14.95

ON SALE MARCH 24

Superman/Batman 8 (Jeph Loeb & Michael Turner) Batman discovers something strange and mysterious on the bottom of Gotham Bay and it looks like a girl. $2.95

Teen Titans Go! 5 (J. Torres & Tim Smith + Lary Stucker) Raven's got the mother of all zits! And while her team tries to be helpful, they only stress her out further, causing the blemish to become an entity of its own! $2.25

Wildcats Version 3.0 #19 (Joe Casey & Francisco Ruiz Velasco; *WildStorm)* What happens when you throw the FBI, Coda, Zealot and the most deadly assassin on Earth at one another? Mature readers. $2.95

Marvel

Ant-Man 4 (of 5; Daniel Way & Clayton Crain; *Max Comics)* Ant-Man digs deeper into finding out who is leaking those dirty little secrets that are threatening our national security. $2.99

Amazing Spider-Man Vol 6: Happy Birthday (J. Michael Straczynski & John Romita Jr) Peter spends his birthday as Spidey fighting an inter-dimensional threat that's descended on Manhattan. Collects Amazing Spider-Man #57-58, the landmark #500, and #501-502! 136pg $12.99

Avengers 80 *(Lionheart of Avalon* 4 of 5, Chuck Austen & Olivier Coipel) A hero from the past is born anew! And the architect of the Avengers' recent troubles stands revealed! $2.25

Incredible Hulk 69 *(Bury Me Not* 4 of 4; Bruce Jones & Doug Braithwaite) There's something big and weird and downright nasty out there in the desert, and it wants everything Bruce Banner has. $2.25

Inhumans 12 *(No Matter the Cost* 4 of 4; Sean Mckeever & Dave Ross) The Inhumans fight for the life of one of their own, but even if they all manage to survive this encounter, how will it affect their relationships with each other – and with humanity? $2.99

Mystique 12 *(Maker's Mark* 2 of 2; Brian K. Vaughan & Manuel Garcia) Mystique's globetrotting missions take her everywhere imaginable, but now she's going back to the last place she'd ever imagine – her romantic past. $2.99

Silver Surfer 7 (Dan Chariton & Stacy Weiss + Lan Medina) Though the Silver Surfer has reunited Denise Waters with her daughter, Stewart Acheron intends to claim Ellie as his own – by any means necessary. $2.99

Spider-Man/Doctor Octopus: Out of Reach 5 (of 5; Colin Mitchell & Derec Aucoin) Spidey and Doctor Octopus duke it out in this series finale, while the fate of Doc Ock's young protégé hangs in the balance! $2.99

Thor Legends Vol 3: Walter Simonson Book III (Walter Simonson; tpbk) From the majesty and mystery of Asgard to the gritty streets of New York City, Thor has never been the same. Continues the collection of Simonson's run, reprinting Thor #360-369. 232pg $24.99

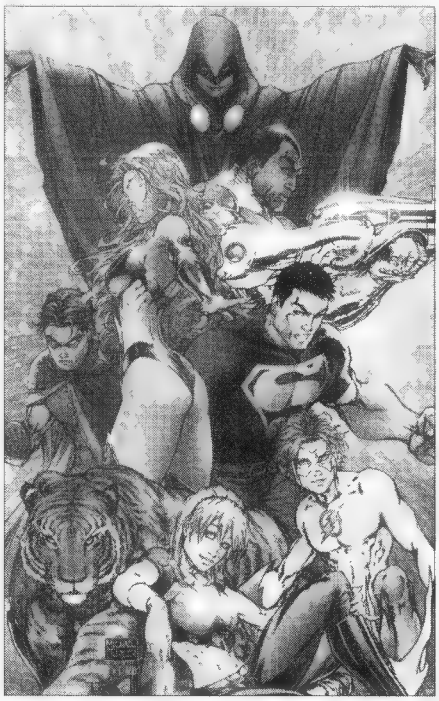
Ultimate Fantastic Four 4 (Mark Millar & Brian Michael Bendis + Adam Kubert) Susan Storm volunteered to be part of Reed Richards' revolutionary experiment along with her friends, but she didn't end up where they did. Alone, Sue finds herself in the subterranean domain of the misanthropic Mole Man! $2.25

Venom 12 *(Patterns* 2 of 3; Daniel Way & Francisco Herrera) The shocking truth behind Venom's resurgence is revealed! Surprisingly enough it involves Reed Richards $2.99

Weapon X 21 *(Countdown to Zero* 3 of 3; Frank Tieri & Jeff Johnson) Agent Zero takes on Gene Nation, and this time, it's personal! $2.99

X-Statix 20 *(The Cure* 2 of 2; Peter Milligan & Mike Allred) One of Professor X's assistants might have discovered the cure for Myles Alfred – a.k.a. Vivisector's condition. $2.99

X-Treme X-Men 44 *(Prisoner of Fire* 5 of 6; Chris Claremont & Igor Kordey) Elias Bogan continues his assault on Sage by turning her against her own team-mates! $2.99



close-up

Teen Titans: A Kid's Game

DC Comics

Writer: Geoff Johns

Artisis: various

Collects Teen Titans #1-7! Witness the gathering of a new team of Teen Titans and their initial battle against an old, familiar foe: Deathstroke! The reasons behind his actions prove shocking to the team, and even before the teen heroes can get their feet on the ground, they must reencounter the cult of Brother Blood. 192pg $9.95

ON SALE MARCH 31

ON SALE FROM

MARCH 31

Dark Horse

Chronicles of Conan Volume 4: Red Nails and Other Stories (Roy Thomas & Barry Windsor-Smith; tpbk) Collects #23-26 of the original Marvel series and material from the second and third issues of Savage Tales, originally published in the 1970s. 160pg .. $15.95

Fused: Think Like a Machine 4 (Steve Niles & Josh Medors + Peter Repovski) Mark Haggerty's body is co-opted and consumed by a robotic exo-suit. Then a crack team of government mercenaries take every step imaginable to try to convince him into joining up with their squad $2.99

Go Boy 7 #8 (Brian Augustyn & Jon Sommariva + Kris Justice) Everything will be revealed in this issue, including the origin of The Cultist, the true nature of BioAgent, as well as the fate of Jonny Zero. $2.99

Star Wars Tales 19 (various) A hyperdrive malfunction sends the Millennium Falcon massively off course trapping Han Solo galaxies away from his home system. 64pg $5.99

Super Manga Blast! 41 (various) If Hoiichi 'Gun' Kano had his way, he'd be getting in fights at school and chasing pretty girls, but an alien race has thrown down the gauntlet of world domination, and he just can't avoid being involved with humankind's only hope: the huge, mysterious Exaxxion robot! 128pg b&w $5.99

one-shot **Ultraman Tiga** Vol 1 (Tony Wong & Khoo Fuk Lung; tpbk) Relying on his martial-arts prowess and his three modes of combat Tiga goes toe to toe with the most terrifying collection of monstrous giants and alien invaders ever to plague the planet. Collects issues #1-4 of the series 128pg $15.95

Ultraman Tiga 8 (of 10, Tony Wong & Khoo Fuk Lung) As the former members of the recently disbanded Global Unlimited Task Squad are kept under lockdown, a malevolent alien presence is controlling Japan's military and activating its weapons of mass destruction. 40pg $3.99

Usagi Yojimbo 74 (Stan Sakai) Wandering ronin Usagi and his young companion Jotaro meet up with Katsuichi-sensei sooner than expected, and all continue on to Kitanoji Temple to retrieve the late samurai Koji's swords. 24pg b&w $2.99

DC Comics

Batman 625 *(Broken City* 6 of 6; Brian Azzarello & Eduardo Risso) When the Dark Knight finally catches up to Angel Lupo and discovers the dark secret behind a young boy's dead parents, his world is turned upside-down. $2.25

one-shot **Batman/Poison Ivy: Cast Shadows** (Ann Nocenti & John Van Fleet) A new skyscraper casts a shadow over Arkham Asylum, blocking the light from Ivy's cell and preventing her from growing plants. 64pg $6.95

Cartoon Cartoons 28 (various) Courage the Cowardly Dog finds aliens in his master's bloodstream, while Ed Edd & Eddy find them in the back yard! $2.25

Catwoman 29 (Ed Brubaker & Paul Gulacy + Jimmy Palmiotti) Selina Kyle has met a foe she can't bring down on her own. So where will she turn for help? $2.50

Doom Patrol Archives Vol 2 (Arnold Drake & Bruno Premiani + Bob Brown; hbk) Collects Doom Patrol #90-97. Robotman, Elasti-Girl, Negative Man and The Chief take on classic villains including The Brotherhood of Evil, the Animal-Vegetable-Mineral Man, Dr Tyme, Mento, General Immortus, and more! 240pg $49.95

The Flash 208 (Geoff Johns & Howard Porter + Livesay) Wally West takes a tour of the new Flash Museum as the Flash family forces itself back into our hero's life. $2.25

Green Lantern 175 (Ben Raab & James Bosch + Rodney Ramos) Having conquered their universe, the Qwardians have set their sights on conquering ours. But first they must destroy the one obstacle standing in their way 48pg .. . $3.50

A Gregory Treasury Vol 1 (Marc Hempel; tpbk) Reintroducing Gregory, a lovable, institutionalised boy in a straitjacket who speaks only in vowels. Sharing his small cell is a mortality challenged rat named Herman Vermin and a cheese-fixated mouse named Wendell. Mature. 176pg b&w $9.95

Hellblazer 194 (Mike Carey & Leonardo Manco; *Vertigo)* Constantine's war with the Beast is done, but the repercussions go rolling on – not the least for John himself, as he wanders wounded through a shattered, shell-shocked London where an insane killer and a very strange little girl both take a deadly interest in his fate. Mature readers. $2.75

JLA 95 (John Byrne + Chris Claremont & Byrne + Jerry Ordway) Superman's been brainwashed, and now he's in the hands of a fanatic cult - an ancient vampiric evil come to life and stalking the humans of the 21st Century! $2.25

The Legion 31 (Dan Abnett + Andy Lanning & Keith Giffen + Al Milgrom) Chuck Taine and Gear travel around the bowels of Legion World as they perform essential maintenance but soon learn that the planet is infested with a deadly virus. $2.50

The Light Brigade 2 (of 4; Peter Tomasi & Peter Snejbjerg) While the daily horrors of the World War rage and intrude on their mission to find The Sword, Chris and the rest of his platoon move deeper into enemy territory in search of a weapon to battle Zephon and his unholy minions, the Nephillim. Mature readers. 48pg $5.95

The Maxx Book Two (Sam Kieth + William Messner-Loebs & Kieth; *WildStorm*, tpbk) Collecting issues #7-13. Mixes reality with whimsy to tell the continuing saga of the Maxx and his soulmate/confidante, Julie. Mature readers. 160pg $17.95

Midnight, Mass: Here There Be Monsters 3 (of 6, John Rozum & Paul Lee; *Vertigo)* A tense summit with the Monster Council of Elders leaves Adam and Julia Kadmon wondering if they really can oppose Magellan's monster colony. Mature readers. $2.95

Planetary 19 (Warren Ellis & John Cassaday; *WildStorm)* An immense object drifting into the solar system ought to be a source of delight for the mystery archaeologists of Planetary but Elijah Snow knows it will drive the unseen member of the Four, Jacob Greene, out of hiding. $2.95

Reign of the Zodiac 8 (Keith Giffen & Colleen Doran + Bob Wiacek) As a young, cruelly exploited seer's warning goes unheeded, a power play by Eidolon's mightiest dominion – the shamanistic House of Scorpio – triggers a disastrous chain of events! $2.75

Superman 203 *(Godfall* 6 of 6; various) Kal-El finds out if he can return to Metropolis – if there's a city left to return to. $2.25

one-shot **Teen Titans: A Kid's Game** (Geoff Johns & various; tpbk) *See Close-Up, left.*

Marvel

1602 #8 (of 8; Neil Gaiman & Andy Kubert) Secrets revealed! Mysteries explained! A mighty sacrifice! Worlds live! Worlds die! Heroes make choices! And other exclamations too! 48pg $3.99

Alias Vol 4: The Secret Origin of Jessica Jones (Brian Michael Bendis & Michael Gaydos; tpbk) Learn all of Jessica Jones's hidden secrets – how she got her superpowers, joined the Avengers and the dark, unspoken of chapter in Marvel Universe history that changed her life forever. Collects Alias #22 28 168pg $17.99

Amazing Spider-Man 506 (J. Michael Straczynski & John Romita Jr.) Peter delves further into the mysterious totemistic origin of his powers when the enigmatic Ezekiel returns! $2.25

Avengers/Thunderbolts 2 (of 6; Kurt Busiek & Fabian Nicieza + Barry Kitson) The villains-turned-would-be-heroes known as the Thunderbolts are back! But which side of the law are they on this time? $2.99

Human Torch 11 (Karl Kesel & Howard Porter) A floating ocean research station unleashes something that could exterminate all life in the universe! $2.99

The Punisher 4 *(In the Beginning* 4 of 6; Garth Ennis & Lewis Larosa, *Max Comics)* Micro makes an offer to Frank that he can't refuse. $2.99

Spectacular Spider-Man 12 *(The Lizard's Tale* 2 of 3; Paul Jenkins & Damion Scott) He's struggled for years to control the coiled reptile that dwells deep within his heart. But now, at the end of his rope, one bad day will change Dr Curt Connors' life forever. $2.25

Thor: Son of Asgard 2 (of 6; Akira Yoshida & Greg Tocchini) Sent on a Great Quest by All-Father Odin, Thor and a fellowship of other young godlings – Balder, Sif and Loki – face their coming of age in this epic story. $2.99

new **Wolverine/Punisher** 1 (of 5; Peter Milligan & Lee Weeks) Deep in the South American jungle there's a final refuge for the nastiest of the nasty to disappear when, say, the Punisher is hunting you down. Now, Frank Castle is about to stumble upon it. $2.99

X-Statix Vol 3: Back from the Dead (Peter Milligan & Mike Allred, tpbk) Deceased European Pop sensation Henrietta Hunter is back from the dead and on her comeback tour – and it's up to the celebrity mutant superteam X-Statix to keep her alive again! Pity about last time. Collects X-Statix #11-18! 192pg $19.99

RELEASED AND ON SALE IN

MARCH

Aardvark-Vanaheim

final issue **Cerebus** 300 *(Latter Days* 35 of 35, Dave Sim & Gerhard) *See Close-Up, below.*

Abstract Studio

Strangers in Paradise Vol 3 #64 (Terry Moore) At 17, David is a former LA street gang member with a bloody past. Now he's trying to build a new life at an eastern school and the future looks bright – until he comes home to visit and meets an under-aged call girl named Katchoo. 24pg b&w $2.95

Amaze Ink/ Slave Labor

Bombaby, Screen Goddess 3 (of 4; Antony Mazzotta) While delving into her subconscious, Sangeeta unveils parts of a shrouded past. 24pg $3.95

Evenfall 7 (Pete Stathis Phoebe and Don sail on an enchanted barge down the deadly River of Pain. What secret will Pheeb discover in its dark waters? Mature readers. 24pg b&w $2.95

Gloomcookie 19 (Serena Valentino & Harley Sparx) Chrys and Sebastian have the alternate universe monster to contend with. Mature. 24pg b&w $2.95

Little Scrowlie 5 (Todd Meister & Jennifer Feinberg) The cats take it to the streets, then down underground, as they abandon the blasted rubble on a quest to rescue James from the clutches of an evil, if cute, succubus. 24pg b&w $2.95

one-shot **Nightmares & Fairy Tales Vol 1: Annabelle Speaks...** (Serena Valentino & FSc) Frightening stories and dark fairy tales. Featuring the first 6 issues, as well as some other spookirific surprises. 160pg b&w $14.95

Nightmares & Fairy Tales 8 (Serena Valentino & FSc) Alone in the forest, on her way to her Grandmother's house, a young girl comes across an enchanting and mysterious man who may very well be a werewolf! 24pg b&w $2.95

Patty-Cake & Friends Vol 2 11 (Scott Roberts) The Bakerman's spend a day at the beach! Mom and Dad frolic in the surf, while Patty and Sandy grow up a little. 48pg b&w $4.95

Seamonsters & Superheroes 3 (Scott Mills) More it's Seamonsters versus Superheroes in an all-out battle. 24pg b&w $2.95

new **Street Angel** 1 (Jim Rugg & Brian Maruca) An evil geologist plans to re-Pangea-fy Earth's continents, annihilating civilization in the process. With time running out, a corrupt Mayor reluctantly turns to his nemesis, the 13- year-old homeless avenger, Street Angel. 24pg b&w $2.95

Antarctic Press

Dragon Arms: Chaos Blade 3 (of 6; David Hutchison) Naga, Anrack, and Hirotsu hunt desperately for the First Sword, hoping to thwart Eon's final bid for world domination. b&w $2.99

Gold Digger 51 (Fred Perry) Lydia, Moisha, and Romeo, imprisoned as thieves in the Leprechauns Fortress of Shoes, finally launch their daring escape from their year-long captivity! . $2.99

Heaven Sent 2 (Ben Dunn) Teen everyman Kyle Talyor is about to experience divine and demonic intervention, heralded by the appearance of Sarah, his Guardian Angel. Bimonthly. b&w $2.99

new **I Hunt Monsters** 1 (Rod Espinosa & Craig Babiar) A cataclysm has occurred and all the monsters captured since the dawn of history have escaped. William Warlock hunts them. b&w $2.99

Legends from Darkwood 4 (of 4; Christopher Reid & John Kantz) Rose and Ira's schemes backfire, leaving a fire breathing unicorn to immolate and perforate the citizens of Unicorntown! b&w $2.99

Luftwaffe: 1946 #18 (Ted Nomura & various) Nuclear destruction in Korea activates the Time Governor in Antarctica, and death and violence in Poland triggers the first stage of the Time Amendment, causing the war of 1946 to repeat itself. 48pg b&w . $5.95

Mangazine 53 (various) Read the American manga pioneer series Ninja High School, *Families of Altered Wars*, Gold Digger, and more. 150pg . $9.99

Neotopia Vol 3 #2 (Rod Espinosa) Still pursued by the malevolent forces of Felltower, Nalyn and her crew disembark on an lost island called Eriden, where they discover an idyllic, civilised paradise. $2.99

Ninja High School 115 (Katie Bair) The Wunan gang discovers a top secret government conspiracy full of people bent on protecting/dominating/destroying the world. b&w . .. $2.99

Screaming Angels 3 (of 3, Ted Nomura & various) Hitler sends his final wave of nuclear strikes against New York City and Washington DC. The women of the First Air Guard fly into Teutonic jaws of death to stop them, even at the cost of their own lives! b&w $3.50

Twilight X: Storm 7 (Joseph Wight) A dark storm breaks across the Caribbean, threatening to swallow both Richard and Melissa aboard the supersub Neptune, and their sworn enemies, the murderous Nationalist Klan. Bimonthly. b&w $2.99

Archie Comics

Archie 547 (various) Archie's goose is cooked when he decides to order Mr Lodge a concrete goose for his lawn! $2.19

Archie & Friends 82 (Bill Golliher & Dan Parent) New kids transfer to Riverdale High everyday, but it's not every day that a spy kid does! .. $2.19

Archie's Mysteries 34 (various) When forensic experts Matt and Mary mysteriously disappear the same morning they're to deliver damaging testimony in a criminal case, it's up to Archie and the Teen Scene Investigators to fly solo and find their mentors! $2.19

Betty 137 (Barbara Slate & Stan Goldberg) When Betty ponders her relationship with Veronica, she realises she does all the giving and Veronica does all the taking. $2.19

Betty & Veronica 199 (various) When Mr Lodge backs a new drive-in, it's a chance for him and his wife to relive nostalgic memories – and for Veronica to relive recent memories of Archie spending time with Betty! $2.19

Betty & Veronica 200 (Kathleen Webb & Jeff Schultz) Can it be true – have Betty and Veronica ended their friendship for good? Not if Nancy can help it, and help is what she intends when she issues the gal pals this challenge: find 100 reasons apiece – 200 reasons total – to stay best friends! $2.19

Jughead 157 (Craig Boldman & Rex Lindsey) The whole town takes a tumble when Jughead decides to finally learn how to do cartwheels-and has everyone else demonstrate how it's done. $2.19

Sabrina the Teenage Witch Vol 2 57 (various) Let the magic of Sabrina cast a spell on you with these new tales! $2.19

Sonic the Hedgehog 134 (Karl Bollers + Jon Gray & Michael Higgins) With the present crisis abated last issue, Sonic finally has the chance to catch up to those near and dear to him, especially one Princess Sally Acorn. $2.19

Sonic The Hedgehog 135 (Romy Chacon + Art Mawhinney & Jim Amash) Dr Robotnik has a new enemy to contend with, and it isn't Sonic! This enemy has left a special present for Robotnik and signed it Anonymous! $2.19

Veronica 151 (Kathleen Webb & Dan Parent) Realising dating a nerd like Randy isn't so bad, Veronica decides to give other nerds a chance. $2.19

Avatar Press

new **Alan Moore's Nightjar** 1 (of 4; Antony Johnston & Max Fiumara) The first series of the continuing saga of Mirrigan Demdyke, all based on Alan Moore's original notes. 18 years ago, Mirrigan watched her father's heart explode in their backyard. That was fair, because Mirrigan's father was Emperor of All the Birds, the most powerful sorcerer in Britain, and that was how they arrange their successions. But on her deathbed, Mirrigan's grandmother reveals a secret – her father wasn't killed by one sorcerer, but seven, and charges Mirrigan with an oath to make them pay for their treacnery! $3.50

Frank Miller's Robocop 9 (of 9; Frank Miller & Juan Jose Ryp) Robocop versus the indestructible Robocop 2 in a huge, final pyrotechnically charged battle in a skyscraper, as the Detroit police put up a desperate fight below with the psychotic Rehabs! Mature. $3.50

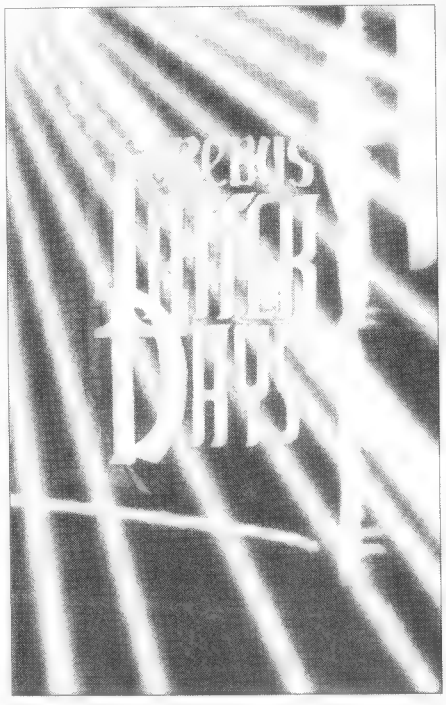
Mark Millar's The Unfunnies 4 (Mark Millar & Anthony Williams) Poor Moe the Crow's family has been through Hell, and the worst is in this issue! Mature readers. $3.50

new **Hellina Versus Pandora** 1 (Doug Miers & Rafa Lopez) The forces of Hell are at war, and a powerful artifact, the Seventh Horn, could decide the fate of the underworld. But Hellina has to first get it from Pandora, who isn't keen on letting go of something that could kill all of humanity! Variant covers. Mature readers. $3.50

Stargate SG-1: P.O.W. 3 (of 3, James Anthony & Renato Guedes) Colonel Jack O'Neill is a Goa'uld prisoner of war. And his memories of the SGC, Earth, and its defences are going to be pulled from his head – unless SG-1 can rescue him. $3.50

Bongo Comics

Simpsons Comics 92 (Dixon & Costanza) Homer gets his grease on when he buys his own Krusty Burger franchise. But his junk food heaven becomes a high cholesterol headache when Krusty's impossible standards of mediocrity prevent him from turning his prized enterprise into a finger-lickin' goldmine. $2.99



close-up

Cerebus #300

Aardvark-Vanaheim

Writer: Dave Sim

Artist: Gerhard

The Final Issue! After 26 years, the last 20 pages of the comic medium's first ever 6,000 page graphic novel will soon be one for the record books. Says Sim: "The fact that Ger and I enter our retirements unencumbered by any debt, the fact that we have never been forced by financial necessity to reliniquish any part of our absolute control over Cerebus as a creative work is a source of no small gratification to us." 24pg b&w . $2.25

ON SALE MARCH

Cartoon Books

Bone Vol 9: Crown of Horns (Jeff Smith; hbk) Trapped in the doomed city of Atheia, while the fate of the Valley is decided by two raging armies, Thorn is haunted by the dangerous and mysterious object of power known as the Crown of Horns. 184pg b&w $24.95

Claypool

Elvira 131 (Strom + Sutton & Anderson) Elvira guests on one of those talk-to-the-dead shows, but something may be awry in the avenue to the afterlife. b&w $2.50

Soulsearchers 65 (David + Heebink & Milgrom) Swept into a literary dimension, Bridget and Baraka meet *The Enclave of Incidental Individuals*, characters from classic fiction who aren't the leads. b&w $2.50

CG Entertainment

new **Negation War Part 1** (Tony Bedard & Paul Pelletier) Now, the world-crushing machine of the dark Negation Universe finally launches an all-out invasion of our own! Can anything challenge their horrific power and prevent utter annihilation? $2.95

Brath 14 (Chuck Dixon & Andrea Di Vito) Who will avenge the son of Brath? Battling her way through a tribe of Cruithi warriors, Tani will make the guilty pay for the loss of her son. $2.95

new **El Cazador: The Bloody Ballad of Blackjack Tom** 1 (Chuck Dixon & Sergio Cariello) His cold heart is as horribly scarred as his frightful face – but how did the deadly pirate known as Blackjack Tom get that way? .. $2.95

Kiss Kiss, Bang Bang 3 (Tony Bedard & Mike Perkins) Who is the criminal mastermind behind the international crime cartel AXIS? $2.95

Brian Pulido's Lady Death: The Wild Hunt 2 (Brian Pulido & Jim Cheung) With the Eldritch now ruling Europe, Lady Death leads the resistance with allies who were once her enemies – only to face enemies who were once allies! $2.95

Route 666 #22 (Tony Bedard & Karl Moline) Deep behind the Iron Curtain, Cassie searches for the gateway to Perdition. $2.95

one-shot **Ruse: Archard's Agents – Myrmoria** (Chuck Dixon & Steve McNiven) Professional adventurer Theophilus Dare accompanies an expedition to find the fabled lost city on the floor of the sea. $2.95

Sojourn 33 (Ian Edginton & Greg Land) Arwyn, Gareth and Cassidy have located the person who knows where the last fragments of Ayden's arrow are... $2.95

Way of the Rat 23 (Chuck Dixon & Luke Ross) Boon battles an immortal creature intent on eating him... and only Po Po can save him! $2.95

R.A. Salvatore's Demonwars Vol 2: Eye For An Eye (Scott Ciencin & Greg Tocchini) The barbarian Andacanavar faces assassins, harems and demon djinns! Collects Demonwars: Eye For An Eye #1-6. 160pg..... $9.95

Dreamwave

Devil May Cry 2 (Brad Mick; & Pat Lee) Things really start to heat up for our mouthful merc when he goes mano-a-monster with the massive demon lord known as Phantom. 40pg $3.95

Duel Masters 5 (Brian Augustyn & Jeremy Tiongson + Dreamwave Colours)

Shobu learns more about the secrets behind being a true Duel Master and discovers new battles, weirder creatures, bigger matches and a whole new level of danger and excitement! $2.95

Transformers: Energon 21 (Simon Furman & Guido Guidi + Elaine To) As Scorponok targets Kicker, convinced that he can fast-track their Energon programme, so Optimus Prime faces off against Unicron's Four Horsemen on Cybertron. $2.95

Transformers: Generation One 3 (Brad Mick & Don Figueroa) Is the combination of the Autobots' courage, Jetfire's intelligence, and Starscream's conniving enough to thwart the superpowered zealot Sunstorm from destroying both the Earth and Cybertron? $2.95

Transformers: The War Within Vol 2 #6 (Simon Furman & Andrew Wildman+ Erik Sander) At the very heart of the planet, the Fallen prepares to crack the seal on the Well of All Sparks, lighting Cybertron up like a beacon. $2.95

new **Transformers Armada: More than Meets the Eye** 1 (of 3; Adam Patyk & Brad Mick) From Autobots to Mini-Cons – and everything in between – here's stunning art and all-new bios on every page. 48pg ... $4.95

close-up

When We Were Very Maakies

Fantagraphics Books

Writers/Artists: various

When We Were Very Maakies features the comical adventures of a drunken crow on the high seas, blending vaudeville-style humour and a breathtaking line that harkens back to the glory days of the American comic strip. Designed by publishing's respected graphic designer, Chip Kidd, this hardcover collection features two years' worth of Maakies. Mature. 96pg b&w ... $19.95

ON SALE MARCH

Fantagraphics

new **The Complete Peanuts Vol 1: 1950-1952** (Charles Schulz; hbk) This volume presents the first two years of Charles M. Schulz' Peanuts strips in a three-tier page format. 352pg b&w $28.95

Comics Journal 260 (various) This issue leads off with a cover chat with Dupuy and Berberian of Mr Jean fame, and continues with an unpublished conversation between the Gil Kane and Jean-Claude Mézières. Mature readers. 128pg $6.95

Death & Candy 4 (Max Andersson) The third and fourth chapters of *Bosnian Flat Dog* conclude the story in an unexpected way involving the Eurovision song contest, American soldiers being abused by Srebrenica ice cream ladies and Tito zombie prostitutes. Mature readers. b&w $4.95

one-shot **When We Were Very Maakies** (various) *See Close-Up, above.*

Image Comics

Alternation 2 (F.G. Haghenbeck & Carlos Barberi) Sam and Tokugawa are aided by the Wright Brothers as they break into Ellis Island Castle to learn more about the origins of the mysterious Atomic Machine. $2.95

one-shot **The Black Forest** (Todd Livingston & Robert Tinnell + Neil Vokes) American pilot Jack Shannon and Archie Caldwell, Britain's greatest stage magician, are sent behind enemy lines, into the heart of the supernatural vortex that is the Black Forest. 96pg b&w $9.95

Bloodstream 2 (of 4; Adam Shaw & Penny Register + Shaw). Amber seduces the lab assistant and escapes her bonds. She then navigates expertly through the BioGenCo complex as if guided by some mysterious, unseen force. Mature readers. $2.95

Casefiles: Sam & Twitch 11 *(Skeletons* 5 of 6; Marc Andreyko & Paul Lee) As the truth behind the powerful Halloran family is uncovered, Sam must face some dark choices he made in his own past! Mature readers. b&w $2.50

The Clockmaker: Act 3 (of 3; various) The doorway to Heaven is finally opening, just as the reason why the clockworks was built and the purpose of the Devil's machinations is revealed! 64pg $6.95

Common Grounds 3 (of 6; Troy Hickman & Dan Jurgens + Chris Bachalo; *Top Cow)* The superhero brother-and-sister team of Strangeness and Charm receive shocking news about their father. $2.99

The Darkness 9 *(In Search of the Blue Goldfish;* Paul Jenkins & Martin Montiel; *Top Cow)* As Jackie Estacado gears up to take control of Family affairs, his first order of business is to clean up some of the dead wood – and that pretty much describes Ernie Palanco. $2 99

one-shot **The Darkness: Resurrection** (Paul Jenkins & Dale Keown + Matt Milla; *Top Cow;* tpbk) Jackie Estacado, mafia hitman and Darkness wielder, died in a blaze of revenge. The Darkness, however, was not about to let him go so easily. It pieced him back together and wrenched him back from the depths of hell. Now, he must find a new place in a family that had moved on without him – and Jackie wants the top spot. Mature readers. 144pg $14.99

David and Goliath 3 (Jay Ju & Leonel Castellani) Goliath's wrath has been released and the struggle for control of David has begun! $2.95

new **Desperate Times** 1 (Chris Eliopoulos) Marty tries to figure out married life, Toad tries to figure out life without his best friend and Kennedy tries to destroy his liver b&w $2.95

one-shot **Heaven, Llc** (Wayne Chinsang & Dave Crosland; graphic novel) When Heaven, LLC's CEO (that's God) turns up missing, all Hell breaks loose! The Board of Trustees sets out to find him, even though no one likes him. Mature readers. 144pg b&w $12.95

Heaven's Devils 4 (of 4: Jai Nitz & Zach Howard) Alan and Madison race to stop Wickliffe from unleashing a virus in Chicago. Millions of lives will be lost if they fail, but can the Earth survive if they succeed? In the final issue, everyone is right, everyone is wrong, and everyone loses. b&w $2 95

Invincible 11 (Robert Kirkman & Ryan Ottley) The status quo becomes a thing of the past when Mark's world is torn apart before his eyes. How will he pick up the pieces? $2.95

Invincible Vol 2: Eight is Enough (Robert Kirkman & Cory Walker + Ryan Ottley) The Invincible Family finally starts to get a handle on the whole superhero thing, while Mark plans for college and the oft-mentioned Guardians of the Globe are finally introduced in this full-length trade paperback featuring what is undoubtedly the single most shocking and unexpected page in the series thus far. 128pg $12.95

Liberty Meadows 36 (Frank Cho) Brandy and Roger's wedding draws near, as Frank the vet makes one last-ditch effort to stop it. $2.95

one-shot **Ministry of Space Omnibus** (Warren Ellis & Chris Weston + Laura Martin) This is the story of how we could have gone to space. Maybe how we should have gone to space. This is the story of the Ministry of Space. Collects the sold out Ministry of Space #1-2. 48pg $4.95

Noble Causes Vol 2: Family Secrets (Jay Faerber & various) Liz is finds herself at the centre of a media frenzy surrounding the pregnancy of Zephyr Noble, as numerous factions – including the Nobles themselves – try to find out the identity of the baby's father. Collects Noble Causes: Family Secrets #1-4. 120pg $12 95

Patient Zero 1 (of 4; John Mclean-Foreman & Brent White) Alex Grant thought that surrendering his freedom to a covert genetics facility would take him away from his problems, but when the facility is invaded by an unknown military force and his only ally lies dying in his arms, Alex must find a way to save them both. $2.95

new **Phantom Jack** 1 (Mike Sang.acomo & Mitchel, Breitweiser) Meet the man who is not there. What would you do if you were unseen? Jack Baxter confronts his fear to release the hero inside, but no good deed goes unpunished $2.95

Powers Vol 2 #1 (Brian Michael Bendis & Michael Avon Oeming) They say the world of Powers has changed so much for this new arc that a new number was the only way to go. Mature. $2 95

PvP 7 (Scott Kurtz) It's not easy being the only female in an all male work environment, but Jade Fontaine has always risen to the challenge – until today. b&w $2 95

one-shot **Reaper** (Robert Kirkman & Cliff Rathburn) Reaper is the deadliest assassin in all the land. His price is high, but his blade is unmatched and worth twice the cost. For reasons unknown, a mysterious figure has hired Reaper to assassinate Lord Shirak so that he may rule. Mature readers. 64pg b&w $6.95

Spawn 144 (various) An ancient evil that has lain dormant since the Dark Ages has been resurrected. In order to defeat it, Spawn must fulfil an oath made centuries ago by the doomed Lord Covenant, a previous incarnation of the Hellspawn. $2.50

Sword of Dracula 3 (of 6; Jason Henderson & William Belk) Sword of Dracula switches into manga-esque overdrive as the fallen angels Samyaza and Azazyel come gunning for Dracula in search of an ancient artifact and then turn their attention on Ronnie Van Helsing and the Polidorium. 22pg b&w $2.95

Tomb Raider 40 *(Risen;* James Bonny & Wilson Tortosa; *Top Cow)* Trapped in a strange wilderness, Lara Croft battles a malevolent force bent on her destruction. The sudden appearance of an old friend and ally is, at first, a welcome sight. ... $2.99

The Walking Dead 6 (Robert Kirkman & Tony Moore) Tensions run high as the gravity of their situation starts to sink in with Rick and the others. Mature readers. b&w $2.95

Wanted 4 (Mark Millar & J.G. Jones; *Top Cow)* It's mayhem in the underworld as the factions of the world-controlling supervillain cadre known as The Fraternity square off against each other. Mature readers. $2.99

Witchblade 74 (David Wohl & Francis Manapul; *Top Cow)* Witchblade bearer and New York Homicide Detective, Sara Pezzini, and Yakuza assassin, Ian Nottingham, continue their assault on the mysterious group, Level 42. $2.99

Witchblade/Dark Minds: The Return of Paradox (David Wohl & Lou Kang; *Top Cow)* Paradox is back. And when she puts Detective Nagawa's life in danger, Nakiko has nowhere else to turn except to the Witchblade. 48pg $6.95

Moonstone

Cisco Kid 2 (of 3; Jim Duffy & Jerry DeCaire) Cisco and Pancho continue their uneasy alliance against a band of child slavers. After catching a break, they plan their raid on the slave camp, and Cisco opens up to Pancho, revealing the story of the stolen locket, and why he's ready to walk through Hell's gates to get it back! Mature. b&w $2.95

new **Moonstone Monsters: Witches** 1 (various) In *The Witch in the Woods,* see how far a young boy is willing to go – and with whom he will deal – to save his sister's life. b&w $2.95

Oni Press

one-shot **Three Strikes** (Nunzio DeFilippis + Christina Weir & Brian Hurtt) Every action has an equal reaction. Or that's what we're taught. Rey just learned different. Noah already knew. Rey's a good kid whose made a terrible mistake. Noah's an ex-cop who became a bondsman in a failed attempt to salvage his marriage. One choice is about to send both their lives into chaos. Mature readers. 152pg b&w $14.95

one-shot **Julius** (Antony Johnston & Brett Weldele) Julius is the gangster king of the East End and his public persona is as beloved as it would be were he true royalty. But in private, his generals conspire to remove Julius for their own selfish gain. 160pg b&w $14.95

Queen & Country Vol 5: Operation Stormfront (Greg Rucka & Carla Speed McNeil) As Tara Chace and the rest of the department reel over the demise of one of their own, a ghost from Director Paul Crocker's past has him sending his minders into danger yet again. Mature readers. 152pg b&w ... $14.95

Deep Sleeper 2 (Phil Hester & Mike Huddleston) Another 32 pages of creepy weirdness from Phil Hester and Mike Huddleston, the pair that brought you The Coffin! Mature readers. b&w$3.50

Love Fights 8 (Andi Watson) The Flamer is tracking down all his old enemies in an attempt to find the perpetrator of the alleged smear campaign. Mature readers. b&w $2.99

Courtney Crumrin in the Twilight Kingdom 3 (Ted Naifeh) Marshal Templeton suspects Courtney of heinous crimes, and follows her and her classmates through goblin town, hoping to gather evidence for the doubtful council. Mature readers. b&w $2.99

Penny Farthing

new **Para** 1 (Stuart Moore + Pablo Villalobos & Mostafa Moussa) 20 years ago, Sara Erie's father died under mysterious circumstances, and now she's determined to uncover the truth. .. $2.95

Sirius

Akiko Vol 7: The Battle for Boach's Keep (Mark Crilley; tpbk) When the intergalactic mega-corporation Gothtek purchases Spuckler's home planet of Nostoram, the heroic space cowboy returns there to defend his family's property. 144pg b&w $14.95

one-shot **Banzai Girl** Vol 1 (Jinky Coronado; tpbk) As her 18th birthday approaches, a young woman begins having nightmares of apocalyptic proportions. 128pg$14.95

one-shot **Deady: The Malevolent Teddy** (Voltaire) Cute on the outside, very twisted on the inside! That's what you get when the galaxy's greatest evil escapes confinement on its homeworld and possesses the body of a teddy bear here on Earth. Mature. 48pg b&w $5.95

Dogwitch 10 (Daniel Schaffer) Violet wanders the dangerous realm of the Treacle Guardians, with her soul replaced by a filthy Ick! Mature readers. 24pg b&w $2.95

Tokyopop

Ai Love You Vol 2 (Ken Akamatsu; graphic novel) When Thirty finds a floppy disc labelled dangerous, Hitoshi panics as he recalls the humiliation he endured because of the information on that disc. b&w $9.99

one-shot **Battle Vixens** Vol 1 (of 4; Yuji Shiozaki; graphic novel) A young girl named Hakufu Sonsaku has a burning desire to beat people up but her mother has forbidden it. Mature. 192pg b&w $9.99

one-shot **Candidate for Goddess** Vol 1 (of 5; Yukiru Sugisaki; graphic novel) One thousand years ago, four planetary systems were utterly destroyed by an alien force. Since then, humans have moved into space colonies and developed humanoid weapons known as Goddesses to defend their last remaining home planet. 192pg b&w $9.99

Confidential Confessions Vol 4 (of 6; Reiko Momochi; graphic novel) Deciding to make a stand against bullies, abusive teachers and social constraints makes for a difficult struggle but at what price will you sacrifice your dignity? 232pg b&w $9.99

one-shot **Demon Ororon** Vol 1 (of 4; Mizuki Hakase; graphic novel) Chiaki is the orphaned daughter of the Archangel Michael and a human woman. Ororon is a devil with a bounty on his head. Together, they struggle to stay alive as the battle between devils and the angelic order rage around them. 240pg b&w ... $9.99

Digimon Series 3 Vol 1 (of 5; Akiyoshi Hongo; graphic novel) When three Digimon fans end up with real Digimonsters, they discover that taking care of a living creature is much more work than dealing with a few pixels on the TV screen! 192pg b&w $9.99

new **DNAngel** Vol 1 (of 5; Yukiru Sugisaki; graphic novel) *See Close-Up, below.*

Dragon Knights Vol 13 (of 17; Mineko Ohkami; graphic novel) Nohiro and three faerie companions travel to the lost continent of Arinas and discover Kharl's castle. 216pg b&w $9.99

Fruits Basket Vol 2 (of 11; Natsuki Takaya; graphic novel) Ever since Tohru Honda discovered the Zodiac secret of the Sohma clan, her eyes have been opened to a world of magic and wonder. But with such a great secret comes great responsibility. b&w $9.99

Getbackers Vol 2 (of 21; Yuya Aoki & Rando Ayamine; graphic novel) After retrieving a lucky cat for their clients, the GetBackers discover a floppy disc that was left behind after the cat was returned. 200pg $9.99

Gravitation Vol 5 (of 12; Maki Murakami; graphic novel) Shuichi and his band, Bad Luck, are a rising star in Japan's pop scene, and their chief rival, ASK, seems doomed to the has been status of an '80s hairband. 224pg b&w $9.99

Happy Mania Vol 7 (of 11; Moyoco Anno; graphic novel) Taka takes advantage of Takahashi's amnesia and fools him into thinking that she is his girlfriend. But he senses that all is not right and sets out to discover more about himself before he is forced to marry Taka. 184pg b&w $9.99

Initial D Vol 11 (of 23; Suichi Shigeno; graphic novel) Ry Takahashi of the Redsuns and Kyoichi of Team Emperor begin their long awaited battle on Akagi in front of an enormous gallery of spectators. 240pg b&w $9.99

Jackie Chan Adventures Vol 3: Jackie and Jade Save the Day (of 4; John Rogers; graphic novel) Jackie's quest to keep the two talismans away from the Dark Hand takes him to Istanbul. 96pg b&w $7.99

Kindaichi Case Files Vol 6: The Legend of Lake Hiren (of 10; Kanari Yozaburo & Sato Fumiya; graphic novel) Hajime and Miyuki participate in a tour of an expensive resort hoping to win an exclusive membership to the club. However, the fun and games come to an end when the participants are killed off one-by-one. 96pg b&w $9.99

King of Hell Vol 5 (of 8; Ra In-Soo & Kim Jae-Hwan; graphic novel) Having survived an assassination attempt, Majeh enters a martial arts championship to discover the mystery behind this great and mysterious event. 192pg b&w $9.99

Les Bijoux Vol 2 (of 5; Eun-Ha Jo & Sang-Sun Park; graphic novel) Having lost his parents, Lapis discovers that he has gained a new family in his friends and after steeling his courage, he departs to find the divine sword of Tumerlin. b&w $9.99

Magic Knight Rayearth II Vol 2 (of 3; CLAMP; graphic novel) To control Cephiro means to sacrifice oneself to keep it safe. This is a lesson the Magic Knights know only too well, however, the invading countries are not aware of this and continue the assault with greater force. b&w $9.99

one-shot **Mink** Vol 1 (of 4; Megumi Tachikawa; graphic novel) While shopping for the latest pop CD, Mink accidentally gets a software CD from the future that allows her to become whomever she wants. 184pg b&w $9.99

one-shot **One** Vol 1 (of 5; Lee Vin Eumpa; graphic novel) Won (One) is an awkward, quiet music student and former child prodigy who is now determined to lead his life as a normal guy. Destiny throws him a curve as he finds himself caught up in an unlikely love triangle. 192pg b&w $9.99

Priest Vol 11 (of 15; Min-Woo Hyung; graphic novel) The order of St. Vertinez, the Vatican's secret branch for taking care of the church's dirty laundry, has been sent to the West to take care of the incident at Stonetale Abbey and its aftermath. 184pg b&w $9.99

Ragnarok Vol 10 (of 10; Myung Jin Lee; graphic novel) Loosely based on the Norse myth about the end of the world, Ragnarok is a Korean tale of swordsmen and sorcerers in an epic adventure that will change the world forever. 192pg b&w $9.99

Rave Master Vol 8 (of 18; Hiro Mashima; graphic novel) Haru's journey has led him to Gen Tower, home of the Demonoid horde. To stop the demonoid attacks and find out the truth about Gale, Haru and his friends must brave this monolith of evil and battle the Five Palace Guardians. 192pg b&w $9.99

Rebirth Vol 7 (of 11; Woo Kalutika; graphic novel) Maybus, now a Major in the Sacred Knights Brigade, finds an unlikely ally in Rett Butler, a Robin Hood-esque bandit awaiting execution. 185pg b&w ... $9.99

Rebound Vol 7 (of 11; Yuriko Nishiyama; graphic novel) With a few games behind them, the question now comes down to if Johnan can keep up this incredible momentum. 200pg b&w $9.99

Samurai Deeper Kyo Vol 6 (of 18; Akimine Kamijyo; graphic novel) Things are coming to a head as Yuya confronts Kyo about her brother's murder but before she can get an answer, the group falls into the trap set by the 12 God Generals. 208pg b&w $9.99

Spongebob Squarepants Cine-Manga Vol 4: Crime and Funishment (of 4; Steven Hillenburg; graphic novel) A crimewave hits the underwater town of Bikini Bottom, and SpongeBob SquarePants is right in the middle of it! 96pg b&w $7.99

Suki Vol 2 (of 3; CLAMP; graphic novel) Book-smart but street-hopeless, Hina is determined to get closer to her next door neighbour and teacher Aso-sensei. Unbeknownst to Hina, her crush is not the mild-mannered teacher he appears to be and is hiding a mysterious past. 192pg b&w $9.99

INTERNATIONAL

Black Library

Warhammer Monthly 79 (various) Darkblade marches his dark elf host into Ulthuan as he begins a desperate bloody war; The crew of Imperius Dictatio struggle to reconnect to their stranded Titan as the natives get restless; The Storm of Chaos is unleashed as the foul hordes advance in the awesome Quarry! b&w 40pg . $3.50

one-shot **Deff Skwadron** (Gordon Rennie & Paul Jeacock; graphic novel) Crammed with Orks, Bommerz and Dead Things (lots of Dead Things), the boyz of the Deff Skwadron line up for their first graphic novel. 64pg b&w $6.99

com.x

Cla$$war 4 (Rob Williams & Travel Foreman) It's time to tell the secret of what's really been happening out in the Nevada desert all these years. Dr Ellard shows Jefferson how the supersoldiers were created and we learn what price America paid in order to lead the world. Mature readers. ..... $3.50/£2.50

one-shot **Cla$$war Collected Edition** (Rob Williams & Travel Foreman) Collects the first three issues. Features new cover by Trevor Hairsine, posters and preview pages from issues 4 and 5. Mature readers. $12.95

Puncture 6 (Russell Uttley & Ben Oliver) Luc Bannor lies burnt in a coma after brutally slaying Priest, while Sam Keen fights desperately to preserve his life's fragile balance. Mature. .. $4.50/£3.50

UK NEWSSTAND

DC Thomson

The Beano 3199-3202 (weekly; various) Classic kids humour anthology featuring Dennis the Menace, the Bash Street Kids, and all your favourites. £0.55

Beano Superstars 146 (various) One complete strip of the long-running humour anthology. 36pg £0.65

Classics from the Comics 92 (various) Anthology reprinting classic cartoon strips from DC Thomson's vintage kids' comics Beano and Dandy. 68pg b&w £1.20

Commando Action and Adventure Stories 3687-3694 (eight per month; digest; various) Featuring one self-contained comic strip per issue. Some new material. 68pg b&w £1.00

Fun-Size Beano 153-154 (fortnightly; various) Pocket-sized spin-off from the Beano featuring Dennis the Menace, and all the usual suspects. 68pg £0.60

Panini Comics

Action Man 93 (four-weekly; various) All-new soldier adventure yarns, plus quizzes and prizes based on the action figure. 28pg £1.50

Astonishing Spider-Man 106 (four-weekly; various; Marvel UK) Official UK outing for US Marvel comic adventures, with free posters and extras. 76pg £2.40

Avengers United 36 (various) Fast-paced action from Marvel's largest superhero team including the Hulk, Captain America, Iron Man, Hawkeye and the Scarlet Witch. £2.40

Doctor Who Magazine 340 (four-weekly; various) Contains celebrity interviews, feature articles and original stories based on everybody's favourite doc. 52pg £3.30

Essential X-Men 109 (four-weekly; various; Marvel UK) Contains material from US editions Giant Sized X-Men #1 and Uncanny X-Men #358. 76pg £2.40

Powerpuff Girls Powerzine 21 (various) Comicstrips and fun, entertaining and humorous features presented by the 3 super-heroines, Blossom, Bubbles and Buttercup. £1.75

Scooby Doo 9 (various) Regular vanquishing of baddies who, frankly would have got away with it if it weren't for those pesky kids. Also contains competitions, activities, quizzes and more! £1.99

Spectacular Spider-Man 93 (various) New comic strips and games. Plus a bunch of free posters and a competition. 36pg £1.50

Transformers Armada 10 (various) Original UK comic strip, data files, cyber-puzzles, competitions and more. . £1.75

Ultimate Spider-Man 25 (various; Marvel UK) Tells a tale of Spider-Man, retold with modern-day computer enhanced artwork. This comic series focuses on the adventures of 15-year old Peter Parker as he attempts to survive battles with evil supervillains and high school bullies alike! £1.95

Ultimate X-Men 11 (various; Marvel UK) Reveals the incredible origins of Cyclops, Marvel Girl, Storm, Beast, Colossus, Iceman – and adds some razor-sharp adamantium to hot things up! £1.95

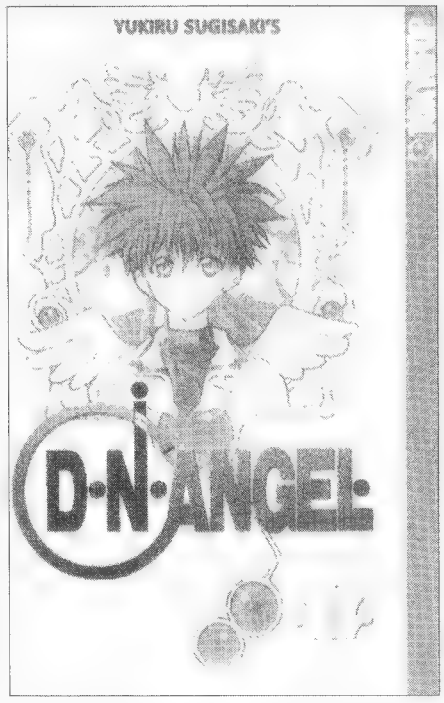
Wolverine & Gambit 95 (four-weekly; various; Marvel UK) Compiles US Marvel's own brand of Wolverine comic strips plus magazine-style feature articles on the tortured lupine one. 76pg .. £2.40

Rebellion

2000 AD Extreme Edition 3: Invasion And Chopper (various) Extreme Editions are brand-new quarterly publications showcasing classic stories from the Galaxy's Greatest Comic. Each edition is themed round a specific character (such as Judge Dredd or P.J. Maybe) or concept, and contains a selection of definitive takes on that subject from 2000 AD creators. 112pg b&w $5.99

2000 AD 1379-1383 (various) Judge Dredd has a family reunion, before leading a mission of mercy. *The Red Seas* comes to an explosive climax, as does *The VCs*. Meanwhile Kara Signysdottir leads the Valkyries in a vital mission. $3.75

Judge Dredd Megazine 217 (various) A Judge Giant special. First, Giant meets new kid on the block Judge Rico in *Prodigal*, then discover the fate of Giant's grand-pappy, the Harlem Heroes' star Aeroballer, in *Whatever Happened to... John 'Giant' Clay?* 100pg $10.99



close-up

DNAngel

Tokyopop

Writer/Artist: Yukiru Sugisaki

Daisuke Niwa is an ordinary middle school student who has an inherited an interesting family tradition. Upon seeing Risa, the girl he adores, he transforms into a daring phantom thief. When the phantom thief sees his object of desire, he turns back into Daisuke. The only way to cure this craziness is if Daisuke can get Risa to fall in love with him, but how can she love someone she can't see? 184pg b&w $9.99

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Networks

Comics news and gossip on the Internet

Compiled by Chris Rice and his team of Netmites

Rich Johnston's LYING IN THE GUTTER

The mild-mannered creator/writer of the Internet's original comics industry rumour and news column has outraged many a publisher and survived more than one change of website. But, despite several attempts to stop it, the Squiddy Award-winning gutterpress site continues to thrive, with over 20,000 hits a week at its new home of www.comicbookresources.com

From his unique vantage point, Rich often scoops the industry newshounds with his stories. Here are the highlights from this month's Gutter...

Ellis's New Thing

Warren Ellis has let it be known that this year was to be his last year thoroughly active in the American comics field. Which means screenplays, games, European and Japanese comics and a novel.

I understand he has sold the rights to his first novel to HarperCollins, to be published in 2005. They describe it as "a comic tour of the dark underbelly of American culture." The book stars "a down-and-out private detective who is hired by heroin-addled G-men to find the lost (secret) Constitution to the United States."

The only games magazine I can bear to touch these days, **Edge**, also mentions he's writing for what is reputed to be a *GoldenEye* killer, *Cold Winter* for the PS2.

Not Work For Hire

Back in March, a team of comicbook professionals – Greg Scott, JF Mettler, Tony Harris, Jason Henderson and Churl Yo – decided to leave their big four assignments for a while and pitched a comicbook series to car manufacturer BMW, based on the company's series of short films *The Hire*. Each film shows a nameless, history-less driver take a short job in a story that always ends with a twist.

BMW's agency seemed interested in co-operating with such a venture. And so the team set about creating proposals, with many pages of drawn, coloured and lettered art. There were many meetings where the process of putting together comics was discussed, as well as budgeting and distribution. Meetings with Diamond were arranged between all three parties and continued for quite a while.

In fact BMW's agency decided that it was such a good idea that they dropped the team of creators and went to Dark Horse. Look forward to Dark Horse's **The Hire** later this year... but without a certain team of people who put in the time, money and effort to get it off the ground.

Jason Henderson, who apparently initiated the project, would only tell me "Hey, that's what professionals sometimes do. They made a business decision. We gave them an eight-month course in making comicbooks and at the end they decided someone else should get the contract and sometimes that happens.

"Luckily since there were no non-disclosure agreements involved, we can at least talk about what we've learned from the process. Because, are you kidding me? Greg Scott, JD Mettler and Tony Harris? The samples are spectacular, as the book would have been."

Lying In The Cracks

I understand there is a **NeverWhere** comic being planned for DC/Vertigo in the not-too-distant future from Neil Gaiman and Michael Zulli. *NeverWhere* was originally a BBC TV series, recently released on DVD, telling the story of a Londoner who "slips between the cracks" and discovers a new, hidden London. A parable for homelessness, a quest for self-justifiction and a series of terrible puns made flesh in the form of The Old Bailey, The Angel Islington and The Black Friars. Written by Neil Gaiman and starring Gary Bakewell, Laura Fraser,

continued on next page...

Net sightings

Reservoir Spider?

Jim Lee recently edited the Newsarama *site for a week, and unsurprisingly took the opportunity to interview a large chunk of the folks involved in the upcoming* ***Superman*** *relaunch. He also took part in a mail-in interview, taking questions from* Newsarama*'s audience about a variety of subjects. Two of the questions and their answers interested* Networks *enough to reprint them here:*

Dave S: Do Marvel and DC pursue big name writers outside of comics? Besides, of course, Kevin Smith. Quentin Tarantino seems to have a jones for comics and he would definitely sell a ton of them if he were enticed to write.

JL: If rumours that I hear turn out to be true, it seems that that just very well may be the case.

Mike D: Hey Jim, John Byrne has claimed on a couple of occasions on his forum, that you invited him to become a founding member of Image prior to its official establishment. Is this true?

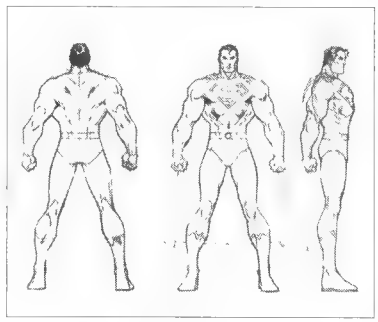
JL: No, but I did ask him – and many other creators – to come and join us. Whether he would have been a founding father would have been a group discussion decided by all of us. At that time, the concept of founding fathers wasn't even existent, since we hadn't really grown beyond the original numbers we started out with. John politely declined but did ask me to jump ship and join him in his fledgling Byrne-verse for Dark Horse and to draw one of his titles. I also politely declined.

Tarantino writing comics has long been dreamed of, but if Jim Lee is repeating rumours, then it may well be happening, folks. After all, Tarantino is said to be the world's biggest ***Spider-Man*** *fan.*

The whole Byrne thing was just plain funny.

Manga threat

Manga has grown to dizzying heights in the western comicbook world, and it accounts for a massive 45% of all publications sold in Japan. It often contains strong sexual content and Japan's laws on freedom of speech have apparently covered some fairly strong stuff over recent years. However, a court in Tokyo has recently ruled a Japanese book obscene, sentencing the publisher to a one-year prison sentence, suspended for three years, for violating Japan's penal code on the sale and distribution of obscene literature. The BBC News *site was the first to break the news:*



Above: Jim Lee's thumbnail sketches for his revamped version of Superman.

Monotori Kishi, a 54-year-old publisher, was handed [the sentence by] presiding Judge Yujiro Nakatani [who] said **Misshitsu**, or **Honey Room**, was too graphic.

"Bodies were drawn in a lifelike manner with little attention to concealment [of genitalia], making for sexually explicit expression and deeming the book pornographic matter," Mr Nakatani said. "Given what's available it seems an extraordinary decision," said the BBC's Tokyo correspondent, Jonathan Head. "There is so much pornography available in Japan in every form – in films, computer games, cartoons and famously manga and anime – those books of cartoons you can see men reading openly on the train everyday," he told the East Asia Today programme.

Mr Kishi immediately appealed to the Tokyo High Court, "It is an infringement on freedom of expression and deals a great blow to the publishing industry," he told a news conference. "The verdict will force publishing houses to curb their activities and lead to a decline in manga."

It was the first ever Japanese court trial in which a comicbook was accused of obscenity. The penal code article on which the prosecution was based, Article 175, does not clearly define what is deemed obscene, but the legal precedent was set by a ruling on a Japanese translation of DH Lawrence's **Lady Chatterley's Lover** in 1957. The Supreme Court at that time declared obscenity was anything "unnecessarily sexually stimulating, [which] damages the normal sexual sense of shame of ordinary people, or is against good sexual moral principles."

Kishi's defence lawyers had argued that some photographs, videos, or items on the internet, were far more explicit than **Misshitsu**.

Networks suspects that ***Misshitsu*** *will probably not be picked up by TokyoPop anytime soon. Eros, on the other hand...*

Up, up and away

There is a certain segment of the business which is in mourning for the comics industry, believing that it

will collapse any second. It certainly seems to be generally acknowledged that comics aren't doing as well as they used to. However, Stuart Moore, in his A Thousand Flowers *column for* Newsarama *had a proper look at the market at the moment, compared to a few years ago, and came up with a few interesting facts and figures:*

There was, indeed, a decline from the salad days of the early '90s. But by February '97, the total dollar amount of the top 300 titles was $19.12 million. The most recent figures I have are for September 2003, and that number is very similar: $19.06 million.

That number is up a bit from the past two years, where sales have tended to range between $16 and $18 million. The low point since February '97 was May '01, with a total of $13 million. The high point was December '97, at $22.9 million.

The new **Comics & Games Retailer** shows a jump in retail sales for October '03 to $21.4 million. That's the highest number since December '97 – without a big #1 at, or near, the top of the charts.

So far, it looks like the industry's fairly steady. But – you say – over that time comics prices have continued to rise – so we're actually selling fewer copies to make that same $19 million.

I don't have the unit sales figures handy dating back to '97. But the latest **CG&R** goes back to July '00, when the number of single copies sold of the top 300 comics was six million copies. (The dollar figure for that month was $17.2 million.) The September '03 tally is 6.5 million copies. That means that the average per-copy price in July '00 was $2.87, and today it's $2.94. Not too steep a climb. Note also that this number can be thrown way off by the presence of a big prestige-format project – like **JLA/ Avengers**, for instance.

August '03's average, lacking that book, was $2.80 a copy – actually lower than the 2000 figure. (The totals were also lower, reflecting, predictably, the absence of a big, exciting book.)

Now obviously these figures don't take into account inflation, but at the same time, it doesn't take into account trade paperback sales, which account for a good percentage of the major publisher's sales.

All in all, Networks *would say that the market appears to be in significantly better shape than many of the doom-sayers might think or would have us believe.*

Chris Bunting's COMICS WEBWORLD

Comics designed to be read faster than Western ones... Layouts notably different from other comic formats... Snowballing in popularity in both the UK and US... What I'm referring to is, of course, manga (meaning "entertaining visual") comics. Focusing on the US manga scene (manga stories created from an American perspective), these sites will allow those of you unfamiliar with this genre to get a real feel of what it's all about.

ANTARCTIC PRESS ***www.antarctic-press.com***
Started a staggering 20 years ago, Texas-based Antarctic Press has to its credit such titles as **Gold Digger**, **Ninja High School**, **Warrior Nun Areala** and **Twilight X**. Its creatives include Ben Dunn, Joe Wight, Rod Espinosa and Fred Perry. This cool, clear and concise site caters for almost everything: from ordering back issues, previews of new ones plus overviews, downloads and even contests. **8**

STUDIO PROTEUS ***www.studioproteus.com***
Studio Proteus's mission is to convert enjoyable Japanese comics into English and then see them published in the English-speaking world. And it's paying off. Not only is this company responsible for most of Dark Horse's manga output, it is also the brains behind titles published by Eros Comics, Titan, Fantagraphics Books and many more. The site itself is helpful, although its layout appears rather jumbled. **6**

GURU-eFX ***www.guru-efx.com***
Using the latest imaging techniques, GURU-eFX offers a unique service of digital colouring. You may know it best for its work for Marvel, Dark Horse, or even the *Hulk* movie DVD, but it also does some seriously cool manga work, including the critically acclaimed **How to Color for Comics** range. This slick online introduction certainly serves its purpose. **7**

TOKYOPOP ***www.tokyopop.com***
This is the official site for the continually expanding publisher – founded in 1996 – which recently entered Bookmark's Top 20 paperback list. Producing popular titles such as **Chobits**, **Priest** and **Wish**, and actively seeking new creative talent through its Rising Stars of Manga contests, it shows no sign of relenting. Its efforts even expand to this site, which, with its own identity, is thoughtfully designed and well constructed. **8**

eigoMANGA ***www.akropolis.com/austin/website/eigomanga/newsite/eigomanga/main***
Born in 2000 as an online-only publisher, eigoMANGA makes its first steps into the print world in February with **Rumble Pak** which, going by previews here, looks very promising. Its online comics such as **Monkey Tale**, **Music Box** and **Bleed 1.0** are still available, but due to the site's awkward structure you have to dig around to find such other interesting offerings as manga art tutorials and online games. **6**

KATIE BAIR ***www.katiebair.com***
This creator writes and draws such manga as **Ninja High School** and **Oasis Destiny** so it's quite extraordinary – as this site reveals – that she is self-taught. What's even more extraordinary is that such a popular creator actively encourages fan contact. A good looking site: not too elaborate yet still enjoyable. **7**

Honourable mentions:
INTRODUCTION TO MANGA *[www.abcb.com/misc/guide_02.htm]* and **VIZ** (USA) *[www.viz.com]*

Rich Johnston's LYING IN THE GUTTER

continued from previous page...

Paterson Joseph, Hywell Bennet, Clive Russell, Peter Capaldi and Trevor Peacock, it was then translated into a fairly successful novel. There has been talk of a movie version from time to time, but it looks like the third *NeverWhere* incarnation will be in comics. A Vertigo **NeverWhere** comicbook was rumoured years ago but didn't come to fruition. That's changed.

Head Line News

Someone who only just found out that Joss Whedon is writing **New X-Men** is *Buffy*'s Giles, Anthony Stewart Head. Head, currently appearing in the pantomime *Peter Pan*, was expecting Joss to be doing a new project with him in it, not some "silly comicbook."

Apparently Joss will be in the UK – to see both Head's production and *When Harry Met Sally*, starring Matthew Perry and Buffy star Alison Hannigan – and Head intends to slam Joss against the wall, ask about these comicbook things and get a final answer on whether the BBC production of *Ripper* will be going ahead.

Glinting Blade

I'm told that Mark Millar's upcoming new Marvel project after *Millarworld* will involve Blade and is aimed to tie in with the next *Blade* film. *Blade*, while a successful movie franchise, has not had much luck as a comic since the **Midnight Sons** days. Attempts to use the film to boost the sales of the comic have failed and, last time, the miniseries was cancelled before it was finished.

Mark Millar's name however might be able to not only give the title a boost, but to kickstart the exponential sales that you see when a big name creator, a big name property and a prominent licence all come together. However, I understand that the title is not actually called **Blade**, just that it involves him prominently. I also understand that David Goyer and Stephen Norrington, *Blade* movie franchise screenwriters, have also been approached to continue the stories of the character in comics at a later date.

The Son of Neal

A website from oldish-school comicbook artist Mike Netzer proclaims his new manifesto as The New Comic Book Of Life. Basically, he is the Second Coming of Christ and he's here to save us through comics.

Such gems as "Comicbook writers, artists, editors and publishers will soon emerge as the real superheroes on the sociopolitical stage of world events..." and "...The planting of the seed of humanity into the new garden, awaiting us on the not-so-distant Titan, the curiously Earthlike satellite of the ringed planet Saturn... He embarked on perpetuating a mad vision within which the comicbook industry would raise the light of the new Messiah and gather into it all of the attention, entertainment & communications values, commercial wealth and spiritual appeal of the whole world."

Sadly Mike has to remind us, "Neal Adams' and Dick Giordano's signatures, appearing in this work, were not signed by the artists themselves and do not of themselves indicate their support for the vision brought forth in the work." What a shame! Come on, Neal and Dick, support this man's vision. He could be the next L Ron Hubbard! And people think John Byrne or Todd McFarlane have egos.

There's more, as Mike draws together world religions and superheroes as Superman: Christian Messiah, Batman: Moslem Avenger and Wonder Woman: Jewish Mother. No, seriously. So prepare to welcome The One who will unite us all. Who is here to save the world. Oh, and draw some comics that look quite like Neal Adams' work.

I'm only providing limited excerpts here. There are many truly staggeringly entertaining moments along the way, but you really do have to read this yourself at *www.michaelnetzer.com*.

Then go out and spread the word!

Alan R Cookson, 4 The Cloisters, Tarleton, Preston, Lancashire, PR4 6UL

Please call or write for a more detailed description of the condition of any comics listed below, all from my personal collection. I always try to collect the highest grade possible and once bought, each comic was read carefully and stored away as a brand new copy. All issues are cents copies unless otherwise stated. Your wants lists are welcome. Postage and packing is 35p per comic. Bids welcome on expensive items and discounts for bulk purchases are negotiable.

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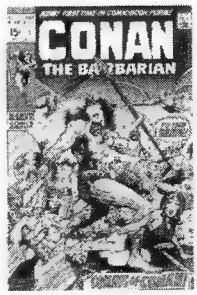

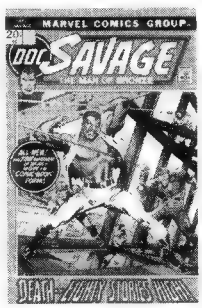

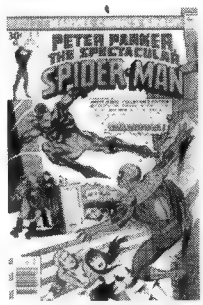

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Reviews

Because few retailers allow titles to be read before purchase, ***Comics International****'s comprehensive reviews section enables comics readers to keep abreast of the wide range of titles currently being published and draw readers' attention to comics they might otherwise ignore. Naturally, this section is of even greater benefit to readers who rely solely on mail order, as they can only judge the quality of a title after purchase.*

Review codes: *Individual titles are judged against all similar comics past and present on a* ***1*** *to* ***10*** *basis, while a comparison is made against previous issues of the same title, ranging from <----> to <+++>. Hence, a quality comic may score an 8 against all others, but have slid from a previous issue's 9, denoted by <->. No change is marked <=>. We do not compare* ***Bone*** *with* ***X-Men****, but review each within their genre.*

Review panel: *Sam Ashurst (SA), Marco Antony (MA), Chris D. Bowen (CDB), Jules Boyle (JB), Chris E. Bunting (CEB), Jon Edwards (JE), Kelvin Green (KG), David Knight (DK), Scott Montgomery (SM), Ian Murphy (IM), Lee Nelson (LN), Rob Nott (RN), Terence Stewart (TS), Mat Thomas (MT), Alex Thompson (MAT)*

Dark Horse

Ghost in the Shell 2: Man-Machine Interface 9

by Shirow

<=> Motoko dives deeper into her enemy's e-brain in her attempt to uncover the mastermind behind the terrorist assaults working through her company, but encounters an even more sinister plot. Masmune Shirow's latest epic is an altogether less action-orientated and more cerebral take on cyber-punk. Although his CGI artwork is awe-inspiring, Shirow's depiction of cyber-space is almost overwhelming to this reader. Meanwhile more pervy otaku worried about the censorship of the title may be glad to see some full-frontal nudity in this issue. (MAT) 8

Ghost in the Shell 2: Man-Machine Interface 11

by Shirow

<=> Masamune Shirow ends the follow-up to his classic cyberpunk manga in very theoretical and metaphysical terms, as a mystic channeler attempts to interpret the events occurring in the virtual world and the dawn of a new age to previously absent members of Section 6. It's all very confusing and perhaps Shirow got a little carried away by his philosophical musings. It doesn't even feature heroine Motoko's pervy robot helpers to lighten the mood! (MAT) 7

The Goon 4

by Powell + Hotz

<=> Eric Powell is joined by the similarly dark-humoured Kyle Hotz for this two-tale issue. There's no mistaking Powell's twisted sense of humour: from the *Outer Limits* piss-take introduction to amorous sea hags and a cherry pie-loving Skunk-Ape, this is full-on bad taste. Although Hotz's inky exaggerated style isn't quite as rounded as that of Powell's, his take on the gruff muscle man and his crazed town is nonetheless well suited. (MAT) 8

Star Wars: Empire 14

by Alden & Trevino

<+> If you ever wondered what happened to Darth Vader straight after the Battle of Yavin, or if you wanted to see the Sith Lord fighting wild animals in an environment not unlike the plains of Africa, you are in luck with this issue! With a witty script by Paul Alden and attractive artwork from Raul Trevino, this is an entertaining read for fans of the bad seed in the Skywalker clan. (SH) 8

Star Wars: Empire 15

by Chadwick & Wheatley

<+> The long-awaited conclusion to the adventures of Luke Skywalker's friend Biggs Darklighter. Dovetailing with events in *A New Hope*, Paul Chadwick has crafted an exciting illumination on one of the more intriguing minor characters of the Star Wars saga. And Doug Wheatley's lush artwork is simply stunning. (SH) 9

Tales of the Vampires 1

by Whedon + Goddard & Sanchez + Lee + Stewart

An auspicious start to an anthology series spotlighting Buffy's blood-sucking foes. TV faves Spike and Dru make an appearance, while a girl geek finds her true worth as a vampire. Hopefully Dark Horse will stick with the Buffy license if the projects are of this high quality. (SH) 8

DC Comics

Batman 622

by Azzarello & Risso

<=> Batman faces the Penguin and Scarface, in his search for the elusive Angel Lupo. Yes, *Broken City* sees Batman fighting what seems to be most of his rogues gallery, but this is no *Hush*. This is far, far more delightful than that. Brian Azzarello and Eduardo Risso's work reminds me of Alan Grant and Norm Breyfogle's run on Batman – stylish artwork complementing some of the strongest plotting on the title for years. This deserves to fly off the shelves. (SA) 9

<=> I didn't have many good things to say about Azzarello when he wrote Hellblazer, so it's a relief to paint a different picture with his writing on Batman. The grim urban setting of Gotham suits his writing style, and his handling of the main Bat-characters shows a deeper understanding of who and what they are than his rendition of John Constantine ever did. Perhaps this is due to the fact that on Batman he is playing to the strengths of the title, rather than trying to tear it away into a dramatic new direction that would never work. (RN) 7

Batman: Gotham Knights 47

by Beatty + Pfeifer & various

<+> When Bane goes in search of his father, Batman and his sidekicks worry that revenge may be his motive. Perhaps Bruce's hopes of reforming his former enemy were misplaced. Bane shows himself to be zealous at the very least in his interpretation of vigilante justice. He really lacks that lightness of touch. Scott Beatty weaves numerous plot threads together, with obvious enjoyment. (DK) 7

Batman: Gotham Knights 48

by Beatty + Cherry & Robinson Cherry + Floyd

<=> Behind a captivating cover lies the tale of Bane's origin. With a lacklustre black and white back-up story, and art by numbers output by the usually reliable Roger Robinson, this book is fatally in freefall towards the relaunch at number 50. Pity, with such promise portrayed in the cover. (CDB) 6

<--> After a direct, no-nonsense set-up, the story goes right off the boil in the second chapter. While Bane and King Snake swap life stories in a competition to see who's had it toughest, Batman makes his leisurely way to the Himalayas to play referee. Even the back-up strip by Eric Cherry amounts to eight wasted pages. (DK) 4

Birds of Prey 60

by Simone & Benes + Lei

Oracle offers Black Canary a 'promotion' to office-bound computer assistant, fearing she's a danger to herself in the field since her recent injuries. Savant gets harsh treatment in jail. Gail Simone continues her affectionate take on these characters, giving them and this title a peptobismal richness and depth long-absent. Ed Benes brings a fetching, relaxed charm to his pencils, although his beefcake bully prison guard constantly looks like a retired C&A mannequin, complete with one fake but 'lifelike' expression. (IM) 6

Birds of Prey 61

by Simone & Benes + Lei

<+> Black Canary sets out to show that despite her injuries she can still party with the bad guys, while Savant breaks out of jail. Gail Simone shows warm but subtle humour in her writing, resisting the big gags, and a keen insight into her characters' psychology. Ed Benes is a capable artist but can look a little flat and so needs to work on perspective and dimension, but, all said and done, this is an enjoyably unexceptional run. (IM) 7

Birds of Prey 62

by Simone & Benes + Lei

<+> Black Canary travels to Hong Kong to visit her dying Sensei, and crosses paths with Lady Shiva, the meanest, bestest warrior in the whole wide world, who demonstrates her skill by biting a guy's finger off. Brids of Prey is a solid action comic, with some smart dialogue, and clean, sexy, art. (TS) 7

Empire 6

by Waid & Kitson

<+> Mark Waid and Barry Kitson are producing some of their best work, as they draw Empire to a satisfying conclusion after six issues of shocking twists and turns. Golgoth once more stands triumphant, but the personal price paid was high, and one has just a smidgen of sympathy for the devil. (TS) 7

Fables 18

by Willingham & Medley; Vertigo

<+> Lilliput's (all-male) army fled to Fabletown, but Bigby explains how come there's now a thriving mixed-sex population. This diverting, standalone Bill Willingham tale is strong on wit and light relief, and Linda Medley's careful impersonation of the MIA Lan Medina's style makes this feel like business as usual: a consistently enjoyable comic. (IM) 7

The Flash 204

by Johns & Dose

<+> While coming to terms with the realisation that he is the Flash, Wally must contend with ramifications in his personal

Hellboy: Weird Tales 6

by various

<=> Three strips feature Hellboy and agents of the Bureau for Paranormal Research and Defense, with the ongoing Lobster Johnson back-up for a fourth. *Command Performance*, by Will Pfeiffer and P. Craig Russell entertains without guarding its mystery. Craig Thompson's contribution, *My Vacation in Hell*, stands out as truly original, illustrating Hellboy's infernal odyssey in the style of grotesque mediaeval woodcuts touched by the hand of Dr Seuss. (DK) 6

<=> Another fine selection of creators take on Mike Mignola's devilish creation. Russell's operatic style lends itself well to the dark world of Hellboy's investigation into a suspicious theatrical troupe. Doug Petrie provides another moody Liz Sherman tale for Gene Colan to expertly illustrate in his rough pencilled fashion. Thompson goes for a more comical approach with his Dante-inspired holiday-in-the-inferno engravings. Meanwhile John Cassaday's Sunday strip pastiche continues to amuse and use dreadful German accents. (MAT) 7

life also. A marked improvement in the artistic approach this issue allows the plot to shine through, but this is still not alluring enough from what was a perfect jumping on point following issue 200's climax. Disappointing. (CDB) 5

Hawkman 22

by Johns & Morales + Bair

<+> Geoff Johns is finally putting some energy into this title, as the Headhunter comes calling, and Hawkman goes a bit wack. Although I'm not sure what to make of Hawkgirl finding Buster Keaton films hilarious. Perhaps it illustrates what a humourless character she is generally? Rags Morales continues to prove his worth as an artist with some lovely figure work. (TS) 6

Hellblazer 191

by Carey & Frusin; Vertigo

<+> John Constantine kills himself – perhaps he's only just heard about the casting of the new movie – and takes a trip to hell, where he faces his toughest foe yet. Chilling, gripping stuff, this is the best horror comic out there, bar none. With wonderfully creepy art, and some of the best possessed villains ever, forget Keanu and pick this up today! (SA) 8

<=> After 191 issues, plus assorted spin-offs, the apocalypse seems to be as common place here as in the average series of *Buffy*. Mike Carey's current storyline drags John through another 'end of the world' crisis which should be something of a cliché except for the fact that Carey is a damn fine writer. Constantine's character is always most satisfying when he teeters out of his depth and fights to hold his world together, and Carey succeeds in preserving that feeling, keeping our man struggling to stay on top of events as they come crashing down around him. (RN) 7

Human Target 5

by Milligan & Pulido; Vertigo

<-> Chance discovers that baseball player McGee had been taking steroids, and uncovers the blackmail that led Reuben to suicide. But McGee going straight has terrible consequences. Peter Milligan is excellent at describing the darkness of human hearts, but this issue feels more ordinary than most. Fortunately, the acquired taste of Javier Pulido's measured linework ensures all emotional punches land on target, but the strike rate desperately needs to improve. (IM) 6

JLA 91

by O'Neil & Huat

<=> The JLA is forced to deal with the intergalactic wildlife police when an alien spacecraft emerges from a tear in the fabric of space-time. Nice though it is to see Tan Eng Huat drawing the JLA, Denny O'Neil's plot provides only a routine filler-standard outing for the team. (DK) 5

<-> If, as editor Mike Carlin believes, everyone has a great JLA story within them, O'Neil probably wrote his around 30-odd years ago. There's nothing new here; a strange alien arrives and the JLA gets involved. Huat's artwork is also a let down after his amazing stint on Doom Patrol. There is none of the incredible page layout work that really lifted that title out of the ordinary, and his figure work looks uncomfortable at best. (TS) 5

The Authority/Lobo: Christmas Crossover

by Giffen + Grant & Bisley; WildStorm

Baby Jenny finds out that Lobo killed Santa, and sends her adoptive super-parents after him. Apart from a couple of moments (the opening caption is brilliant), this isn't as funny as it needs to be or thinks it is, and the plot really doesn't go anywhere. But it is nice to see Simon Bisley's grotesque art again. (KG) 7

After the fairly pitiful relaunch series of The Authority, rabid fans at last get something to celebrate as WildStorm's 'widescreen' heroes take on DC's dreadlocked mercenary for this festive special. Unsurprisingly Keith Giffen plays this encounter for laughs, as the young Jenny Sparks discovers the awful truth about Santa and God's parasitic earwigs employ a certain albino to get revenge, making me think this is perhaps more of a Lobo one-shot with The Authority tagged on? Fortunately Bisley's visceral artwork manages to purge all memory of the team's present 'artist'. (MAT) 8

JSA 55

by Johns & Kirk + Champagne

<+> Christmas, and a perfect opportunity for reflection, and optimism for the future. Probably the lamest characters in DC history gets dusted off with a sentimental ditty which only Geoff Johns could pull off. Some particularly nice artwork by outgoing artist Leonard Kirk sets the standard for new recruit Don Kramer. (CDB) 6

The Legion 28

by Abnett + Lanning & Batista + Wallace

<-> A total sprocking mess! Too many disparate threads clumsily explained by boringly expressed talking heads, interspersed with flaccid, ineffectual, fight scenes. Apparently, this is the greatest challenge the Legion has ever faced, but I'm buggered if I'm feeling it. (TS) 5

Lucifer 45

by Carey & Naifeh; Vertigo

Another of Mike Carey's one-shot stories, this time augmented by Ted Naifeh proving that he can do other art styles besides cutesy goth cartoons. Funny and nasty; who could ask for more? (DM) 8

Masks: Too Hot for TV!

by various; WildStorm

The one novel idea here is a reality TV show with camera crews following superheroes on active duty. The five episodes are mostly lewd, crude and exploitative, with Ed Brubaker the only writer who seems to care about working the thin premise into anything like a recognisable superhero universe. No more, please. (DK) 3

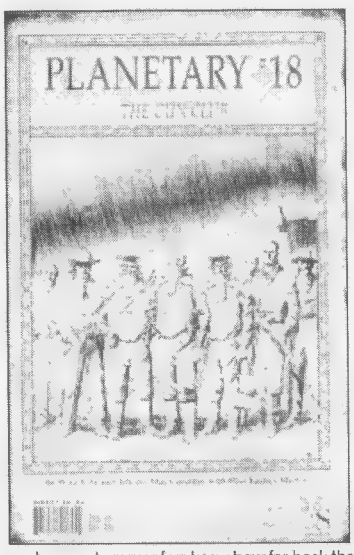
Plastic Man 1

by Baker

Plastic Man returns for his own series, under the watchful eye of Kyle Baker, who introduces present-day readers to the malleable criminal-turned-crimefighter, his murky alter-ego and another plot in which to entrap him. Baker's colourful Tex Avery-style artwork captures the comical daftness of the character perfectly; but his storylines aren't quite as manically far-fetched as Plas-creator Jack Cole's work. Although I doubt modern audiences could cope with such loony plot lines. (MAT) 7

Planetary 18

by Ellis & Cassaday; WildStorm



<+> Although his recent spate of miniseries may have disappointed, Warren Ellis continues to display his evident skill as a writer in the pages of the infrequently issued Planetary. Planetary seems light years away from the Hollywood-inspired histrionics of his other recent work, and benefits from a calmer, more subdued style of writing, and an invigorated sense of purpose. This is the Ellis that deserves the praise, as opposed to the 'sound and fury' writer of Global Frequency. (RN) 8

<=> In the light of Beagle 2's disappearance, Ellis reminds us that the US has had its fair share of astronautical mistakes. Though perhaps not many of us knew how far back they went, as White and his team discover a 150-year old lunar orbiter on its return descent. Ellis manages to create another old pulp fantasy for the archaeologists of the unknown to uncover, while John Cassaday's clear linework and Laura Martin's colours are as sumptuous as ever. (MAT) 8

Robin 121

by Willingham & Mays + Sowd

<+> With Fables writer Bill Willingham's debut issue, Robin starts a new school and tracks down the thief of a powerful artefact. The script is delectably good, despite a largely ho-hum plot, and portrays Robin as a well-trained but over-eager puppy. While Rick Mays' pencils are intriguing, there's a subtle homo-erotic charge to his work, but also some strong visual puns and ironies. Never previously a regular Robin reader, I'm looking forward to discovering this train's destination. (IM) 7

Rose & Thorn 1

by Simone & Melo + Green

Rising star Gail Simone narrates Rhosyn's time in a mental institution, ably avoiding worthy clichés and crafting striking scenes for the talented and exciting Adriana Melo to portray. The two work well together, Melo in particular showing great skill and versatility over scenes of anger, violence, corruption and manipulation. A strong start to this limited miniseries. (IM) 7

Stormwatch: Team Achilles 18

by Wright & Smith + Nguyen; WildStorm

<=> The team finally manages to turn the tide against the Super Patriot's squad of super-powered anarchists and army of zombies, while dealing with an inept group of 'heroes' and the destruction of Capital Hill. Never one to pull punches, Micah Ian Wright may cause a few raised eyebrows at the secret origin of the Patriot's spirit; while he also makes a sly jab at the kind of characters that once made WildStorm's name. (MAT) 7

Superman: The Kansas Sighting 1-2

by DeMatteis & Tolagson

Tales of alien abductions around the time of Kal-El's arrival on Earth lead him to suspect that his father Jor-El was involved. J.M. DeMatteis's customarily spiritually inclined script deftly links the Superman mythos with UFO mythology. Jamie Tolagson provides some highly imaginative artwork, with his alien creatures being particularly impressive. (SH) 8

Vertical

by Seagle & Allred + Bond; Vertigo

For once, a novelty format book that actually takes advantage of its non-rackable style! Mike Allred makes good with his inspired retro linework for a story set in the cradle of pop art, Andy Warhol's Factory, as a reserved, but daring freefaller finds himself drawn towards a young hopeful plagued by the voice of her dead father. Steven T. Seagle manages to not be too pretentious in his play on the concept for this bright and breezy love story. (MAT) 8

Wildcats Version 3.0 #16

by Casey & Nguyen + Friend; WildStorm

<+> Marlowe readies for the release of HALO Corp's battery-powered cars, setting the US Administration's hackles up, these

certainly aren't C5s. Meanwhile Grifter inhabits Maxine Manchester's cyborg body, to the distraction of his techno-whiz homey Lincoln. Joe Casey ups the ante, introducing new conflicts, proving the title's new direction is more than superheroes in corporate suits. Dustin Nguyen's art has developed beyond 'Travis Charest meets manga', to a more assured, looser style, which unfortunately still isn't quite the right feel for the book. (MAT) 7

Wonder Woman 199

by Rucka & Johnson + Snyder

<=> The penultimate issue before the supposedly grand conclusion to *Down To Earth*, and still the story is bogged down in ideology. Some great characterisation, and Greg Rucka has succeeded in making the gods interesting at long last – no more moping about in togas – but there doesn't seem to be any real sense of drama here. Drew Johnson's pencils, when he's not drawing some ropey-looking figure work, have a smooth, plastic quality that's unfortunately neither endearing, nor interesting. (TS) 6

Y: The Last Man 17

by Vaughan
& Chadwick + Marzan Jr; Vertigo

<=> Yorick and friends interrupt a performance of a play about a conjectured last man on Earth to retrieve Ampersand the monkey. This arc has felt too light, and, though for some it may be a welcome relief from the heavy drama that preceded it, I miss the intensity. Brian K. Vaughan's plot feels directionless, which does not bode well, and Paul Chadwick's linework is too frequently slight rather than illustrative but Jose Marzan Jr's inks make the most of it and overall it's still far from bad. (IM) 5

Image

The Walking Dead 3

by Kirkman & Moore

<=> Ah, zombies... you have to shoot 'em in the head, you know. It's the only way to be sure. Any comic, reasonably well written, and competently drawn, with a subject matter that borrows heavily from George Romero and *28 Days Later*, is going to get a decent review from me. That the writing and art is better than average means I can excuse my natural bias and recommend this zombie fest to anyone with a passing interest in post-apocalypse horror. The quality is in the detail, and Robert Kirkman's scripts portray the Romero-esque world as both convincing and (morbidly) interesting. One of the best new comics around. (RN) 7

<=> After the surprise reunion of last issue Rick catches up with his family and the ragtag of survivors from the zombie apocalypse. Kirkman skilfully captures the emotions of his characters and survivalist mentality against the ever-present threat of the undead horde. Tony Moore's detailed yet rough-edged linework and moody grey tones perfectly evoke the desolation of the autumnal landscape and dirty characters. A superb series that you'd be foolish to ignore. (MAT) 8

Wildguard 4

by Nauck

<-> The candidates auditioning for superteam membership start to really earn their hero stripes under the leadership and watchful eye of Producer X, as the rescue mission gets into full swing. With the selection process derailed by the alien abduction of the contestants, this is arguably the weakest episode so far; but it's certain to become interesting when the shortlisting gets underway again. (DK) 6

Wanted 1

by Millar
& Jones + Mounts; Top Cow

Wesley Gibson is a grade-A loser: his girlfriend is cheating on him, he has a lousy job, and no self-esteem. So when 'The Fox' shoots a diner full of people just to get his attention – Wesley's life seems like it can't get any worse. Little does he know, it's about to get a hell of a lot better. The first *Millar World* title is an absolute blast – *Fight Club* meets a supervillain Watchmen. The scene where Wesley discovers his 'powers' is worth the cover-price alone. Let's hope Mark Millar can keep up the pace. (SA) 8

Wesley Gibson has an ordinarily, unhappy life, but when his absent father, the bisexual 'world's greatest hitman', is killed he inherits a badge which allows him to do anything, to anyone, apparently without consequences. Millar captures the dirty heart of miserable, seedy lifestyles but struggles to make any of the characters sympathetic or even interesting. J.G. Jones's thick use of over-laden colours swamps detail and makes me want to squint. Millar's reputation keeps this on a short fuse for me – I'm barely interested to see where this goes, so issue 2 will have to blow to keep me on board. (IM) 3

The first of Millar's *Millar World* vanity imprint, Wanted is a tale of a down-on-his-luck everyman who suddenly discovers he's the heir to a dead supervillain's fortune. The inheritance however is conditional on taking up the villain's previous career. Millar's handling of the first issue sets the scene well and mixes a Nick Hornby 'relationship confessional' style with an irreverent Warren Ellis/Garth Ennis take on superpeople. This is a subject matter in which Millar excels, so you're pretty much guaranteed a good read at the very least. (RN) 7

A perverted *Brewster's Millions* with a violent twist, Wanted is Millar at his viscous, unrestrained best. This issue introduces Wesley Gibson, a guy whose life has flatlined, but which changes for better or worse when he discovers he is the offspring of the world's greatest killer. No widescreen action, but who cares? You know you want it! (MR) 8

Marvel

Amazing Spider-Man 502

by Straczynski
& Romita Jr + Hanna

<=> Where do superhumans go to get their costumes repaired? To tailor Leo Zelinsky, of course. And who does Leo go to when he learns of an assassination plot? Spidey, of course. J. Michael Straczynski finds yet another untapped aspect of the Marvel universe to explore and, as always, it plays into part of a much bigger picture. Stupendous storytelling. (CEB) 8

<+> Another life-affirming interlude issue as Spidey is tipped off by a secretive tailor, who faces a moral dilemma about revealing his client's dubious intentions, and gives Peter some advice about his wardrobe. Straczynski has been knocking these fun scripts out for a while now and though it's good to see the lighter aspects of Spider-Man's exploits, it would be nice to see a darker side to his writing, or at least less clashes with generic villains. As always, John Romita Jr's lithe art does these comical tales justice. (MAT) 7

Avengers 75

by Johns & Kolins + Sotomayor

<=> Hulk and She-Hulk smack each other around for a bit, and the Jack of Hearts turns up to save the day. This is an improvement on previous issues only in that, blissfully, it's the end of the story. The writing veers from nonsensical to stupid, and the art from grotesque to confusing. (KG) 4

<-> He and She Hulk get into a ruck, and kick the snot out of each other. Until Jack of Hearts does something with his radiation powers that sorts the whole mess out. Geoff Johns is probably not sure how, either. (TS) 5

<=> Two green-skinned gamma-radiated cousins fight, leaving little choice but to call in the team's own living nuclear reactor, Jack of Hearts. Scott Kolins does a lovely job illustrating this She-Hulk-centred arc, using slightly fragile yet clearly defined linework with a cartoony brilliance added by Chris Sotomayor's colours. Johns shows understanding of the characters, even the briefly dumbed-down Jennifer. A shame it didn't last longer, for all those fans who enjoyed ogling her in her undies (ahem...). (MAT) 7

Captain America 21

by Morales & Bachalo + Townsend

<=> More blurring of the lines when Rogers is approached to sit in on the trial of a Guantanamo Bay prisoner. Robert Morales keeps the post-9/11 feel to this political conscious title. Even for a fan of Chris Bachalo, the art, detailed as it is, is a mite confusing in places. And what's with the nosepiece on the mask? Remember, this is Captain America, not Batman. (CDB) 7

<+> Real-life issues continue to surface in a universe of indestructible metals and mask-wearers, as Cap finally confronts the Patriot Act. This looks different and reads different. Such radical creative overhauls are often met with resentment by fans, and this will be no exception. After the fluctuating quality of previous issues it is, however, a refreshing and welcome change, as creators Morales and Bachalo get off to an auspicious start. (CEB) 7

Cap breaks up a sex slave gang and meets new girl Rebecca. I've rarely enjoyed Bachalo's art – his recent New X-Men issues just weren't my bag – but here he shines brightly: personality, mood and physical presence all show in these pages, ably coloured by Bachalo himself, while Tim Townsend's inks run with the grain to emphasise and enhance, insisting they create powerful, vivid scenes. I've confidence in Truth writer Morales' ability following this solid start to his run. (IM) 8

<+> New scribe Morales allows the man behind the mask some down time for once, and also examines the relevance of the old icon in today's more forceful USA. It's also refreshing to note that most of the jingoism recently seen in this book seems to have been toned down. Bachalo, reunited with old pal Townsend, delivers the tale with aplomb in his own unique style. (LN) 7

<+> Another creative crew attempts to breathe life into the patriotic hero, as Morales moves from the controversial black Captain to the real deal, joined by Bachalo's quirky artwork. Morales infuses more politics into the series as Cap deals with sex slave trafficking and finds himself being used as a PR pawn for a terrorist detainee's trail. This potentially intriguing plot still has enough action for adrenalin junkies, a shame that its impact is nullified by more of Bachalo's ugly composition and messy artwork. (MAT) 7

Captain Marvel 17

by David & Azaceta + Sotomayor

<=> Sibling rivalry takes over as Marv fights the sister he never had but never got on with, all the while his cosmic awareness malfunctioning and the universe in a state of flux due to temporal rifts of energy. It sounds complicated, but thanks to Peter David's expert handling, not only does it read effortlessly, it reads enjoyably too. Since I started reviewing this title, it's almost consistently been awarded a 9 score; if you haven't already, you should check out why that is. (CEB) 9

Daredevil 55

by Mack; Marvel Knights

<+> Echo and Wolverine talk, in her vision quest, leading to reconcile with Daredevil. David Mack has shown a keen understanding of character, motivation and narrative technique during his short run. In other hands this tale could have been slow, predictable and pretentious, but he has given Echo's story passion, believability and a painfully sharp and psychologically honest truth, all magnified through his astounding collage-technique artistry, which makes him the finest writer-artist in mainstream comics. (IM) 8

<=> Mack concludes Echo's vision quest and encounter with a certain clawed mutant as she begins a new chapter in her life, leaving Matt behind. Once more, although I have no doubts about the artistic merits of Mack's collage work, I still question whether it is appropriate for this title; instead of being infused with meaning or pushing forward the narrative, the art comes across as rather

pretentious and wasted on a monthly mainstream superhero title. (MAT) 6

The Eternal 6

by Austen & Walker + Coleby; MAX Comics

<=> For all the rightly deserved knocking Chuck Austen gets for his work on the mutant titles, he sure managed to surprise me with this impressive series. Taking the immortal Jack Kirby characters from the 1970s and enthusing them with Biblical meaning brought them right up to date. Add to that Kev Walker's stylishly scratchy artwork and inspired designs and you have a title undeserving of its curtailed publication. (MAT) 7

Fantastic Four 508

by Waid & Porter + Rapmund

<+> Each member of the Fantasic Four is possessed by Dr Doom while his body is in limbo. Like an earthquake, the shocks keep coming in this 'gotta be there' issue. Mark Waid never misses a step in his reinterpretation of Marvel's first family. Surely now is the time to return the cover banner "World's Greatest Comicbook". (CDB) 8

<=> Dr Doom returns and lives up to his name, while the Fantastic Four are unable to live up to theirs after a bloody – and subtracting – battle. Shock revelations are met with even greater ones as Waid refuses to rest on his laurels for one moment, nor allow the reader to do so. This writer is arguably the best thing to happen to the FF since Lee and Kirby. (CEB) 8

Hulk: Gray 3

by Loeb & Sale; Marvel Knights

<=> Hulkie unintentionally squashes a bunny while the teenage Rick Jones is taken in for questioning by 'Thunderbolt' Ross, observed by a certain industrialist with a predilection for dressing up in metal suits. Yup, Jeph Loeb's revisionist telling of the story of another of Marvel's icons, but perhaps this was just an excuse for him and Tim Sale to depict the iron avenger before they go exclusive with the Distinguished Competitor. (MAT) 7

Iron Man 75

by Jackson & Miller + Lucas

<=> Can Tony Stark make good on his promise? Or are there worse threats in politics than your common garden variety spandex sinister? Jorge Lucas's work alone is worth the cover price, but John Jackson Miller certainly shows a talent for political swordplay, which goes hand in (iron) glove with the Golden Avenger. (CDB) 7

Marvel 1602 #5

by Gaiman & Kubert + Isanove; Marvel Knights

<+> As a new monarch ascends to the throne, the forces of good are forced into treason. The plot gets moving at long last, and there is an effective sense of things hanging in the balance. The art is as good as ever and the storytelling is a great deal less erratic. (KG) 8

<-> Clea tells Virginia the tale of the Fantastick Four, thought dead but really prisoners of Count Doom whom Javier, Fury and Strange plan to free. This plot moves ever more slowly, but perhaps some action is around the corner. Neil Gaiman is a wonderful writer, but has yet to reveal the merits of this exercise, while Andy Kubert and Richard Isanove's artwork still looks cramped and uncomfortable, and I would lose patience with the project were it most other writers at the helm. (IM) 5

<=> The research for this title appears patchy at times, with this issue depicting some very mediaeval looking soldiers tramping around in what is supposed to be a 17th century setting. By now all the elements of Gaiman's plot are in place, but the sum of the whole is still less than its individual parts. Although we see many familiar-looking Marvel names, only a small handful (Fury, Strange, Murdock) show any sign of detailed characterisation. Gaiman continues to rely too heavily on the assumption that we already know these people, and therefore he doesn't have to put in any work to make them seem interesting. Overall, this series has been a crashing disappointment. (RN) 5

New X-Men 150

by Morrison & Jiminez + Lanning

<+> The X-Men face off against Magneto, and not everyone is going to survive. The *Return of The King* of comics, this is violent, epic and grand. Grant Morrison seems to have been writing one big arc on his run, and everything is resolved here. Well, almost everything; let's just say there are enough questions to keep us going through the final mini-arc. But as it stands this is as good a conclusion as any. One question, since when were Fantomex and Cyclops this cool? (SA) 9

<-> This may appeal to a hard core of X-Men fans, but it's hard to see what all the fuss is about. The grand finale to Magneto's plan for world domination becomes a confusing debacle, with the characters' motivation unclear for the most part. Horrible. (DK) 4

<-> The 'final' confrontation with Magneto is as disappointing as all issues since Xorn's revelation. The X-Men somehow conveniently trick him into a stupid blunder that allows their victory, but the 'shocking' death scene is immediately minimised by the last-page 'revelation' that suggests that even Morrison lacks the nerve to kill off a central character permanently. Deeply disappointing, this arc has undermined his hitherto-sound reputation as a great X-Men writer. Phil Jimenez's work is strong but it's disappointment that rings out the loudest. (IM) 6

<=> Sadly, Morrison's writing seems to have hit a stagnant patch. If he isn't plagiarising his own back catalogue (The Filth) then he's producing substandard (for him) superhero tales, of which X-Men is one. His own roster of original characters that he added to the series uniformly fail to impress, and his handling of the more traditional X-Men stars is bland and formulaic. The current Magneto storyline should have been an epic, but it comes across as a half-hearted, lacklustre affair. For a writer of Morrison's stature, this is a worrying development. (RN) 5

<+> Magneto, all but abandoned by his Brotherhood of Ugly Mutants while rushing on Kick, is finally despatched as *Planet X* draws to a brutal close. As promised, an X- Man dies, but probably not for long, eh? Morrison has had fun with all the familiar X-obsessions, greeting them head on with a fresh eye and (at times) producing a thoroughly gripping soap opera. (TS) 7

<=> Magneto shouldn't have been surprised that even Morrison wouldn't let him last much longer after his shock return and latest megalomaniacal feat, nor will fans be surprised to find that Logan and Jean didn't frazzle on the sun, as the Phoenix rises again to lead the resistance. But for all the death and destruction of this bumper issue, so ably illustrated by Jimenez, it comes across rather flat, and hardly has the cool edge that I'd expect for Morrison's turning point of the series. (MAT) 7

New X-Men 151

by Morrison & Silvestri

<=> 150 years into the future, and a rogue human and his pet Sentinel are on the run from cloned Nightcrawlers – and that's just the opening few pages. Grant Morrison's take on the classic *Days of Future Past* is truly stunning. Marc Silvestri is perfect for Morrison's script – his art as detailed as the writing is inventive – and the combination of the two is up there with the best of this run. If Morrison's aim was to combine the best of the old X-Men with the issues of today, then he's done so in style; this new arc seems to exemplify that idea... and then some. (SA) 9

NYX #3

by Quesada & Middleton

<=> A vicious pimp bullies his teenage mutant weirdo prostitutes, including the child of a very famous X-Man. Without giving too much away, it's a brave move to take a character from a kids' spin-off show, and put them in a series this adult. Let's just hope it's not the cash-in it initially appears to be. As always, the art is spectacular, the dialogue is very creepy in places, and there are some nice plot-twists. Highly recommended. (SA) 8

<-> Kiden helps Cameron recuperate from her injuries, but angrily refuses to believe Kiden's a mutant. A clawed female mutant suffers, exploited by her heartless pimp – until Kiden gets a blood-filled vision and goes to find her. Although slow, this issue has a moody, cinematic feel worthy of Martin Scorsese, ably generated by Joshua Middleton's straggly art and Joe Quesada's sparse dialogue. Given time to find its place, this could develop into a must-read book. For now, it's an enjoyable diversion with strong potential. Buy these issues now, while you can afford them. (IM) 6

<=> Young mutant Kiden and her recovering teacher come to the aid of a self-harming prostitute with a familiar set of claws. Quesada's new pet project is a very classy product, managing to avoid the clichés of other mutant titles and brilliantly capturing the

Ultimate Fantastic Four 1

by Bendis + Millar & Kubert + Miki

The latest addition to the Ultimate universe, Ultimate Fantastic Four 1 focuses on Reed Richards – boy genius. It's nice to see Reed Richards as a Peter Parker-style character – glasses, high school outcast, etc, rather than the confident inventor we all know and love. The relationship between Ben Grimm and Reed is also nicely handled, particularly Reed's dad's attitude to Grimm. This is a confident start from four of the best in the business. (SA) 8

A superb start to the Ultimate version of Marvel's first family. This origin story is very different to Lee and Kirby's classic tale, with nerdy kid Reed Richards discovering how to send matter into another dimension and being recruited by the US Government to work with their top scientists. The writing team of Brian Michael Bendis and Mark Millar works well, and there is some sterling artwork from Adam Kubert and Danny Miki. As with Ultimate X-Men, this title looks likely to surpass its regular Marvel universe counterpart. (SH) 9

Bendis and Millar's contemporary take on Marvel's first family is given added credence by their adoption of a more detailed origin and background for the group. We see the believable scenario of the young prodigy Reed being bullied and misunderstood, although Ben Grimm's motives in befriending him remain unclear. Kubert does his level best to provide both the quiet moments and the large scale ending required by the script. (LN) 6

Treating us to an extended introduction of how the FF originally met, we see the Millar/Bendis version of Reed Richards bullied as a child for his geekish interest in science, protected by an older and tougher Ben Grimm. Reed's genius seems a little over the top: no matter how clever you are, I don't think it's possible to phase objects into a different dimension using just a kid's chemistry set and some transistor radio parts. Not as gripping as the build up shown in the first issue of The Ultimates, but with these two writers involved for the long haul you know this title will quickly justify the slow start. (RN) 6

Marvel finally redresses its First Family for a new generation under the continuity-free Ultimate umbrella. With both Bendis and Millar on board, this should be a no-lose situation. Their intro to the more youthful characters shows they've got the hang of their relationships. Unfortunately, the dominance of the six-issue paperback-reprint means we probably won't see the powered team until the end of the second comic, making Bryan Hitch's cover moot. Kubert's expressive artwork works fine, but he sure needs to learn how to draw newborns. (MAT) 7

harsh realities of the street, while also being genuinely moving and funny in places. Middleton's star continues to rise; his refreshingly simple yet beautifully clear artwork and bright colours are simply outstanding. (MAT) 8

Punisher 37

by Ennis & McCrea + Miki; Marvel Knights

The final part of the final arc, Frank unleashes the Hulk's wrath, then ties up some loose ends. A fitting conclusion to Garth Ennis's slapstick take on The Punisher, this mixes the humour and dark pathos that has made this such a popular title. Ending where it began, with Frank gazing over the city, this ties everything up nicely – just in time for the Born-esque *MAX Comics* series to begin. And I, for one, can't wait. (SA) 7

Runaways 9

by Vaughan & Alphona; Tsunami

<-> Alex and Karoline bicker with Nico, to whom – vulnerable and upset – Topher reveals his deadly secret! There's a simple grace and subtle joy found in Adrian Alphona's light artistic touch, but this title has to be careful to avoid too much of the Dawsons. It can sometimes too feel too insubstantial and soap-operatic to take seriously, but it remains a consistently enjoyable read. (IM) 6

Sentinel 10

by McKeever & Udon; Tsunami

<=> Jessie and Ashleigh vie for Juston's attentions. The plaintively drawn and movingly written opening pages use a familiar styling to effectively refresh readers with the plot, but, now cancelled, I think the talented Sean McKeever has worked out a way to round up the key plotlines by the final issue. It'll be a shame to see this go, but I'm sure that all involved have promising futures in comics. (IM) 6

Supreme Power 6

by Straczynski & Frank + Sibal; MAX Comics

<=> Hyperion meets both the Atlanta Blur and Nighthawk, finding them to be very different people. J. Michael Straczynski packs a lot of characters and ideas into this issue but blends them all seamlessly. Supreme Power is building up to be his best work yet. (SA) 8

Ultimate Six 5

by Bendis + Hairsine + Miki

<++> Five become Six, and it's up to a grumpy Captain America to stop them. After a slow start, this series has finally kicked into gear, with some lovely widescreen set pieces. So sit back and enjoy Aunt May shouting at the government, Norman Osborn turning into Gollum (with Peter becoming his Precious) and a last page that will leave you grinning like an idiot in anticipation of issue 6. (SA) 7

Ultimate Spider-Man 51

by Bendis + Bagley + Thibert

<=> Spider-Man learns that women can be troublesome as he faces an angry Mary-Jane, Ultimate Black Cat and a surprise guest. Brian Michael Bendis is brave enough to give us an extended conversation between two very minor characters in this issue; the fact that he makes it so gripping is a testament to his talent. As for the Mary-Jane situation, one look from Gwen Stacy and I can't wait to see how this turns out. (SA) 8

The Ultimates 12

by Millar & Hitch + Neary

<+> This is a great read; if not for the graphic violence alone, then for Mark Millar's ability to surprise. He's written The Ultimates into a veritable inferno, where the survival of the human race depends upon the heroes' ferocity as much as their skill. Thor and Captain America, in particular, fight like men possessed. Absolutely not to be missed! (DK) 9

<=> Perhaps the widescreen blockbuster with 'kewl' throwaway lines approach to comics is getting a tad too last week. Cap battles it out with the Chitauri big wig, while the others do what they can to stem the invasion. But, like a kebab from the dodgy shop opposite the all-night garage after a night on the bevy, reading The Ultimates can sometimes only seem like a good idea at the time. Bryan Hitch has a nice Joe Kubert thing going on in places, though. (TS) 6

<=> The team engages with the malicious aliens and is taking no prisoners in this latest instalment of officially the best comic Marvel is currently publishing. Millar provides the snappy dialogue and epic spectacle, while Hitch sends more jaws a'dropping with each finely detailed awe-inspiring panel. And just when you thought this violent confrontation couldn't get much worse, the military drops an agitated Dr Banner onto the battle ground. Well, they do say 13 is an unlucky number, Mr Alien. (MAT) 9

Ultimate Spider-Man 52

by Bendis + Bagley + Thibert

<-> Pretty much one big fight, as Black Cat faces Elektra, and Spider-Man gets thrown off a building. This is Mark Bagley's issue, with the Elektra/ Spidey fight being up there with his best work. A fun read, with some intriguing plotlines starting to appear – one of which leads to a lovely reference to one of DC's finest. Enjoyable stuff, with a nice cliffhanger ending. (SA) 7

Ultimate X-Men 40

by Bendis & Finch + Thibert

<=> The X-Men get some well-deserved rest, and Professor Xavier finds a new mutant to join the team. The introduction of Ultimate Angel throws up some nice plot-points – most interesting of all being Storm's insinuations about Ultimate Colossus, one storyline I look forward to being followed up. The art is lovely once more, with David Finch's Angel being truly imposing. If you've never tried Ultimate X-Men, this is a great starting point. (SA) 7

<+> Xavier tries to recruit The Angel, whom Rogue assumes is a 'real' Angel and Beast announces the presence of on-line, causing great controversy. Uncomfortable, Storm persuades Angel to stay. Finch's hesitant pencils are lovely, enhanced by the bright embellishments of colourists Frank D'armata and Morry Hollowell. Brain Michael Bendis's plot feels a little slow but the script is savvy and well worked through. (IM) 7

Ultimate X-Men 41

by Bendis & Finch + Miki

<+>The Angel descends upon the Xavier Institute, allowing the normal anti-mutant protests to be replaced by visits from religious interest groups with their own views on his coming. Brian Michael Bendis continues to deliver character-led issues in a team book, although he is playing to his strengths. David Finch's work is more complementary to the story when he refrains from drawing all his characters with a permanent scowl. (LN) 7

Uncanny X-Men 434

by Austen & Miyazawa

<=> Largely through Lorna's intervention, the X-Men escape Azael's dimension, but with more unexplained than I'd like for the ending to this confused plot. Fortunately, Chuck Austen scripts better than he plots: the interchanges between Nightcrawler and his new-found brother are cute. Fill-in artist Takeshi Miyazawa manages a few memorable panels but overall fails to develop mood or tension, preferring an inappropriately comic tone. (IM) 4

Gloom Cookie 18

by Valentino & Sparks; Slave Labor Graphics

<=> Chrys becomes the centre of attention, seized as she is by a strange blood-lust. Vermillion gets a sympathy visit from Lex, which only reinforces his delusions when he misinterprets her newly-altered state. New artist Harley Sparks makes her debut this issue, without the change of style being jarring. However, Serena Valentino's storytelling tends towards incoherence now and then. (DK) 6

I used to enjoy this comic, but this issue is truly terrible. Valentino has always been a self-indulgent writer, but this is just taking the piss. And to ice this unpalatable cake, Sparks' artwork style mixes together all the worst elements of everybody who's ever drawn the series in an attempt to pastiche them all at once. (DM) 3

Uncanny X-Men 435

by Austen & Garney + Morales

<-> When Rhino tries to break out of a Canadian prison, it's up to Juggernaut – who's awaiting trial – to stop him. Writer Chuck Austen uses a She-Hulk guest-spot to make an unlikely, out of character, visual joke, while Ron Garney's art runs through average to poor, via mediocre. Although the fight scenes are competently drawn, Mark Morales' inks box him in and Pete Pantazi's colours are bolshy and overpowering. (IM) 3

Uncanny X-Men 436

by Austen & Garney + Morales

What? Is that really Juggernaut going toe-to-toe with Cain Marko? With the X-books relying so heavily on manga art, it is once again a breath of fresh air to encounter storytelling using crisp, powerful and fluid art. Chuck Austen's plots always read better when handled by the likes of Ron Garney. Marvel really ought to relinquish its courtship with Japanese artists. (CDB) 6

Wolverine: The End 2

by Jenkins & Castellini + Mounts

<-> Logan takes a trip to Japan to try to uncover the secrets of his past. And finds himself facing a new foe. This has all the elements of the modern Wolverine: trips to Japan, the rescue of a young girl from evildoers and some gruff exchanges with a new sidekick. Yet I find myself enjoying it all the more. Perhaps it's the promise of a final Wolverine story, which will solve the man's many mysteries, or maybe it's the moody artwork? One thing's for sure, I'll be on board for the next issue. (SA) 7

X-Treme X-Men 35

by Claremont & Kordey + Adams

<--> Lots of short and poorly illustrated fight scenes see the team bring a temporary peace to the town, but Greg Adams' inks emphasise all the weaknesses, the stodgy scenes and unwieldy thick lines in Igor Kordey's pencils. I intensely dislike such muddied artwork, inexplicably worse than last issue, and with Chris Claremont bringing this arc to a customary false resolution – nothing is finalised, all is left dangling – it's a poor hotchpotch of an issue and maddeningly dissatisfactory. (IM) 3

X-Treme X-Men 36

by Claremont & Kordey + Hanna

<=> Storm reunites with Yukio and decides to test the strength of her physical recovery in a mutant gladiatorial contest, complete with an oddly androgynous and manipulative compere. Despite Storm wearing two vastly different costumes inside, both ugly, it's a third outfit on the cover. To describe Chris Claremont's work here as plotting is to exaggerate, this story is so thin, and Scott Hanna's return as inker does nothing to improve the unsubtle and often

abysmal artwork herein. (IM) 2

X-Treme X-Men 37

by Claremont & Kordey + Hanna

<+> Strong Guy, after the obligatory (and dull) brawl on meeting, explains to Storm and Yukio how the gladiatorial arena works. Chris Claremont's plot lacks in logic and judgment, and though credit is due to Transparency Digital for some moody colours, Igor Kordey and Scott Hanna's artwork really is pretty ordinary and inexpressive. (IM) 4

US Indies

Counter Ops 3

by Ang & Song Kim; Antarctic Press

<=> The JTF-3 team tracks the nerve agent VXD-9, but finds far more than they'd originally bargained for. J. Ang's contemporary-relevant scripting is as tight as always, but not so much so that artist Jin Song Kim doesn't get the opportunity to showcase his formidable talent. Spies, lies, and lots of action. (CEB) 7

Courtney Crumrin in the Twilight Kingdom 1

by Naifeh; Oni Press

It's gone all urban, as Courtney pays a visit to her old 'hood. The Night Things are greatly missed in this opening chapter, and there's a pall of gloom over everything, including Courtney's parents' efforts to sell their city apartment. However, Courtney's sulkiness is a reassuring constant, and the mystery deepens almost imperceptibly. (DK) 6

Demo #2: Emmy

by Wood & Cloonan; AiT/Planet Lar

<=> Another youngster with powers beyond her control gets into trouble as Brian Wood continues his indie take on angsty mutant types. Fortunately Wood manages to avoid folks with claws or multiple timelines for these standalone storylines. Becky Cloonan's art takes a move closer to her manga inspirations with the use of zippatone and Wood's sparse layouts for another fine issue. (MAT) 7

Frank Miller's Robocop 3

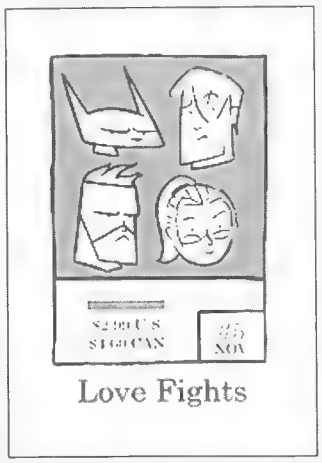
by Miller + Grant & Ryp; Pulsar/Avatar

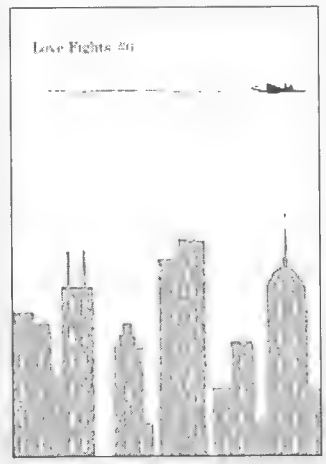
<=> Robocop takes on the corrupt psychos working on behalf of OCP, while a manipulative executive sets her designs on the Robocop 2 project. Steve Grant successfully transfers Frank Miller's film script onto the comics page, but it is Juan Jose Ryp's hyper-detailed art that really stands out in this more visceral issue. Every bullet, blood droplet and splinter of glass is lovingly rendered, but gets pointlessly squeezed into the comic format. (MAT) 7

The Gift 1

by Gregory & Kirkham + Galli; Overseas Entertainment

Bar-keep Tony witnesses a mob hit, but finds himself possessed of miraculous new powers that allow him to cheat death at their hands. The artwork, by Tyler Kirkham, is occasionally fetching, but sometimes over-drawn (especially on the tough guys) while Raven Gregory's script smacks of pretension. I think Overseas would like this to be a more literary exploration of fantasy events but in reality it's a pulp fiction tale with fantasy leanings. Thus far, it's mildly enjoyable nonsense, but could improve. (IM) 4





Love Fights 5

by Watson; Oni Press

<=> Superhero artist Jack gets landed with the hack inker from hell, yet finally manages to get another date with gossip journalist Nora, but just what is Jack's superpowered cat, Guthrie, up to? Andi Watson's latest relationships-in-heroville series is a little more lightweight than his more realistic work, but still manages to be heartfelt, while the influence of manga iconography is present in his beautifully stripped down and delicate brushwork. (MAT) 8

Love Fights 6

<=> Jack discovers that jealous superpowered pet cats and girlfriends don't mix as his attempts at intimacy with Nora are disrupted, while he also discovers some dirty truths about the inker on his comicbook. Watson successfully manages to play the real world within heroville without being sanctimonious or misty-eyed over guys in spandex; instead he is much more light-hearted about life and relationships and has a comical take on muscle-bound flyguys. (MAT) 8

How to Draw Manga 26

by Jackson; Antarctic Press; $4.95

<=> Under a cool cover by GURU eFX, artist Sherard Jackson brings an issue's worth of a lesson on how to design and draw robot "Mechs" (Transformers by any other name). From simple ankle joints to complex Combiners, Jackson clearly and carefully covers it all. Another helpful issue in this varied and artist-assisting series. (CEB) 7

Metal Hurlant 9

by various; Humanoids Publishing

<=> This anthology continues to impress, bringing together both US and European talents on short and on-going strips. Dan Wickline plays psychological games with his post-apocalyptic short, illuminated by Mark Vgouroux's Corben-esque art. Tommy Lee Edwards' scruffy linework captures the feel of the Wild West, while fans of Guy Davis's scratchy art are treated to two of his strips. Combining this with more Alexandro Jodorowsky sci-fi madness, Stefano Raffaele's teen zombie series and a knowledgeable review article shows the high standard of product that Humanoids manages to reach. (MAT) 7

Loxley: Honour Among Thieves

by Short & O'Farrell; Alchemy Texts, 20 Grants Ave, Bournemouth BH1 4NR

When an innocent young man is captured and tortured, Loxley and his gang spring into action, but in a far more brutal way than usually portrayed. The artwork is solid, although awkward in places, but it's only Blake O'Farrell's first issue, and practice makes perfect. John A. Short's script flows well, yet his reliance on swearing has the potential to jolt the reader out of the narrative. Quibbles aside, this is an accomplished UK indie comic and its progress will be interesting to follow. (CEB) 7

Short turns his attention from superheroes in 'Nam to violence and foul language in medieval Nottingham, for a take on the Robin Hood myth with narry a man in tights to hand. Adding a few feisty babes and a drunken dwarf to Loxley's retinue, Short also plays around with the staid stereotypes of the more recognisable characters. O'Farrell's clearly rendered artwork is perhaps a little too well-wrought for the down and dirty take on these popular myths. (MAT) 6

Queen & Country 22

by Rucka & Hawthorne; Oni Press

<=> This title passed me by to begin with, which is a shame, because Q&C is a gripping and realistic read, with well-written characters and a down-to-earth approach to British-style espionage that is all the more surprising considering it's written by one of our colonial cousins. Greg Rucka eschews the glossy world of jetsetting spy movies for a more mundane Le Carre world of back-biting, bureaucracy and double dealing. Needless to say, this would make an excellent Channel 4 miniseries. (RN) 7

Space Ace 2

by Kirkman & Borges; MVCreations/CrossGen

<=> Due to age fluctuations, Ace has to avoid the angry Gorf. Ace's failure to do so results in Gorf's success in bringing back an even bigger menace. But what's the mystery matter that outweighs even their chance of revenge against Ace? Polished, harmless adventure thanks to the busiest man in comics, Robert Kirkman, and the bright and brash art of Paulo Borges. A cartoon of a comic. (CEB) 7

Tales of the Realm 2

by Kirkman & Tyree + Garcia; MVCreations/CrossGen

<=> TV stars Thomas, James and Amy set off to rescue a Hollywood director in the hope that by doing so he'll award them their big break in movies. But when trouble rears its head and the guys realise that they only know how to use weapons with choreography, who'll hurt them the most: the enemy, or themselves? The light-hearted tone helps this title stand out from so much of today's sombre output. A recommended read. (CEB) 7

Canadian Indies

Transformers: Armada 18

by Furman & Guidi + To; DreamWave

<-> Autobots and Decepticons join forces in a final battle against the devourer Unicron. This is a disappointing climax to Armada, as the plot merely retreads the 1986 movie, as well as the final issues of Furman's Marvel run. The art is good, but the rushed storytelling and cramped panels do not properly convey the sense of doom the story aims at. (KG) 6

Transformers/GI Joe 3

by Ney Rieber & Lee; DreamWave

<=> The Joes make their way under fire onto Cobra Island, while Cobra Commander takes the upper hand over the equally devious Megatron and Storm Shadow meets a grizzly end against Snake Eyes. John Ney Rieber's sparse script works perfectly with the moody inky shadows of Jae Lee, turning a rather daft *What If..?* style meeting between the two toy lines into a credible series. (MAT) 7

Transformers: The War Within 3

by Furman & Wildman + Sander; DreamWave

<+> As conflict spreads, Jetfire begins to

suspect that there is a mastermind behind the violence. Simon Furman handles both the action and the mystery very well, maintaining a good balance. Andrew Wildman's art is less flashy than that of the other DreamWave artists, but the stripped-down approach is not merely a refreshing change, but quite effective in its own right. (KG) 8

UK Indies

Burglar Bill 3

by Grist; Dancing Elephant Press
PO Box 104, Highbridge, TA9 4WD

<=> Heavy-handed bobby Kelvin Flats is warned to ease off on arrests, much to the alarm of tramp Tinsley Viaduct who just wants a bed for the night. Meanwhile, hack journo Walkley gives Ms Parks a night to remember and burglars raid a police depot. Paul Grist's new material, since the shelving of this, his first title, has all the usual naïve charm and skill at weaving together multiple storylines that we expect from this master storyteller. Although perhaps choosing to name all the characters after areas of Sheffield is an in-joke too far! (MAT) 7

Jack Staff 12

by Grist; Dancing Elephant Press
P.O. Box 104, Highbridge, TA9 4WD

The conclusion to Paul Grist's series begun and set chronologically before his current Image run is finally here. Detective Inspector Maveryk and Becky Burdock are present in a story with a bungled bank raid and a Time Leech that feeds on temporal energy. Grist uses his signature device of multiple perspectives to good effect, with the added twist of flashbacks to enable simultaneous narrative accounts. (DK) 6

<=> Grist finally releases the last self-published issue of his Union Jack-wearing hero's series. He even splashes out on some interior colour, as our patriotic champion finds himself dealing with Time Leaches, vampire reporters, resurrected Victorian escapologists and bank vaults. Grist's charmingly simple linework and interweaving storylines are shown off to full effect for this standalone issue. A great intro to the character, showing just how canny Image was for picking it up. (MAT) 8

UK Newsstand

Commando 3679

by unknown; DC Thomson

<-> *Frontier Fury* is an above average mystery yarn set in British-occupied India at the turn of the 19th Century. A rebellion is being stirred up by a gun-running fakir with apparent magical powers, helped by a shady European mercenary. And it's up to Captain Andrew Gillespie to stop them. A solid if slightly clichéd story, featuring the usual blustery, mutton-chop whiskered military stereotypes. (SM) 7

Judge Dredd The Megazine 214

by various; Rebellion

<--> Four new strips begin this issue, while *Xtnct* ends its run. John Wagner does a better seasonal Dredd tale here than in Prog 2004, illustrated by both Cam Kennedy and Henry Flint. Pat Mills gets back on his soapbox to write *Whatever Happened to Tweak?* A separate Strontium Dog reprint book, *The Galaxy Killers*, adds a bonus 48 pages, which can't be bad. (DK) 7

2000 AD Progs 1369-1370

by various; Rebellion

<-> All serials conclude to make way for the eagerly awaited Prog 2004. There's not much to get the thrill-circuits racing, but the flaccid line-up is enlivened by a couple of standalone *Future Shocks*. *Tadfraggers* by Simon Spurrier, Gary Crutchley and Cliff Robinson, and *Autocrats Anonymous* by Jaspre Bark and P.J. Holden set a standard not matched by the rest of the content. (DK) 4

2000 AD Prog 2004

by various; Rebellion

<++> Like a breath of fresh air, it's the 100-page Christmas issue. *The Red Seas*, *Slaine*, *The VCs* and *Robo-Hunter* return as on-going series, while *Nikolai Dante* and *Caballistics Inc.* make flying visits. The extra-length Dredd tale is run of the mill, but only *Monsters of Rock* really appals. (DK) 7

Warhammer Monthly 76

by Abnett + Coleby
& various; Black Library

<=> Sixty-eight pages of sci-fi mayhem, which begins with Dan Abnett and Karl Richardson's *Lone Wolves* strip (picking up where the graphic novel left off). This is followed by a Liliana Falcone and Hellbrandt Grimm showdown, with the final offering provided by Dan Abnett again, *Post Mortem*. All-in-all, this is a cool, carnage-filled comic. (CEB) 7

Small Press

The 0 Men 22

by Eden; Ominous Comics
£1.50 from M. Eden
19a Trevalyan Road, Tooting
London SW17 9LS

<++> As Pathe confronts Doctor 0, the 0 Men face their own considerable problems. Excellent stuff again, with twists and turns aplenty, superb characterisation and some of the best art in the series so far. Absolutely brilliant, and fully deserving of the top score. (KG) 9

Pest Control 4

by Springford; Ominous Comics
£1 from G. Springford
2 Cawston Court, Highland Road
Bromley BR1 4AF

<+> I really have no idea what's going on in this comic, but that really is part of its success. Deep, disturbing mysteries, flawed but likable characters and inventive imagery all together make this a very fresh look at superheroes. A superb cover too. (KG) 8

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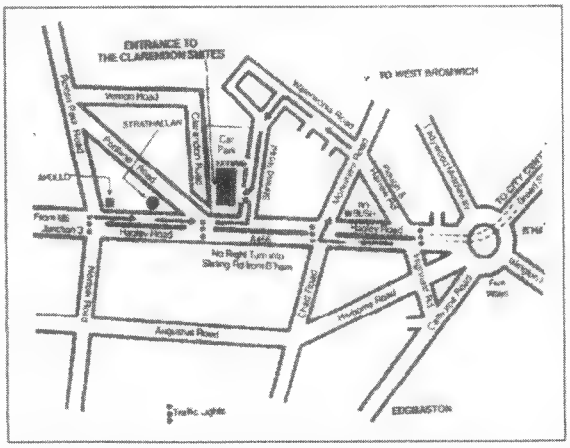

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OPENS MIDDAY

Don Lawrence: Knight of Orange

Tribute by
LIAM SHARP

I WANTED to write something as a posthumous tribute to Don. Something that encapsulated his influence on me and summed up our friendship. But now that I sit here at the computer, I find myself somewhat lost for words.

The last week or so has been very strange. Lis left me a message early the following morning, after Don's death. It was two hours before I heard it. I ran up the stairs shaking, shouting through the bathroom door to my wife.

"Chris...Don's died..."

"What?"

"Don. He died. Last night. Lis phoned..."

I imagine many who knew him as I did will know that stark shock of sudden emptiness. A new hole that can never be filled. I know Don was a father figure to many more people than just me. He engendered it.

So many of us grew up in awe of his talent, and knowing him – even growing to love him – just increased our appreciation of the man. He was "the Master". We were all his children.

DON Lawrence across the decades. Above: a superb piece of black and white brush work from 1990. Below: From over 30 years earlier, an example of Don's halftone wash approach used in ***Zip*** *(1959). Facing: a portrait of Don's first critically-acclaimed heroic fantasy character, Karl the Viking, whose adventures he drew for* ***Lion*** *(1960-1967) primarily from scripts by SF author H. Ken Bulmer.*

Don was not a sentimentalist particularly. And I find myself laughing that much of what stays with me is his tactless criticism! Don always spoke as he found, and as an impressionable youth I found myself aping that as I got older. This often landed me in trouble as I spoke my mind, and damn the consequences!

I've learned since that this is a role reserved for a special few in this world. The few untouchables. Nobody likes the kid who thinks he knows best, but we'll all humour the old master.

And he was difficult in other ways too. I wanted so much to please him. To fulfill my own perception of his expectations for me. And I always felt like I failed. When I worked with him all those years back – copying his pages brushstroke for brushstroke, and later ruling up and finishing the odd panel in *Vandaal the Destroyer* – I was too young. I hadn't yet lived enough to share his depth of vision. I couldn't begin to draw with his fluency. I was lacking the required work-ethic and discipline. And ultimately I didn't want to be just a clone, a style replicator. There is only one Don Lawrence, and that's as it should be. What I wanted was to find out who Liam Sharp really was.

In some ways I'm still looking. When I returned to help him on his last **Storm** album a couple of years back, much of this was put to rest, but it resurfaced when we tried to get a new **Storm** title off the ground. I'll always be sorry that it didn't work out.

So I'll remember with wry fondness the difficult old bugger who often made me feel both childish and hopeless! But I'll also remember the other Don. The Don who was always glad to see me. The encouraging Don. The Don who made me feel part of the family. The Don who talked with me conspiratorially. The Don who shared his inner feelings, and shared his irritations and his passions with me.

An era is ended. As far as I can see, Don has no natural artistic inheritors. As I said earlier, he's left a hole that cannot be filled, not by anyone. I can think of no other creator who put the heart and soul into a single strip the way Don did. *The Trigan Empire* and **Storm** will remain forever the sole domain of Don Lawrence, no matter the others who tried his boots on for size (and bloody big boots they were too!) or those who may yet follow. In the end we were all just visiting.

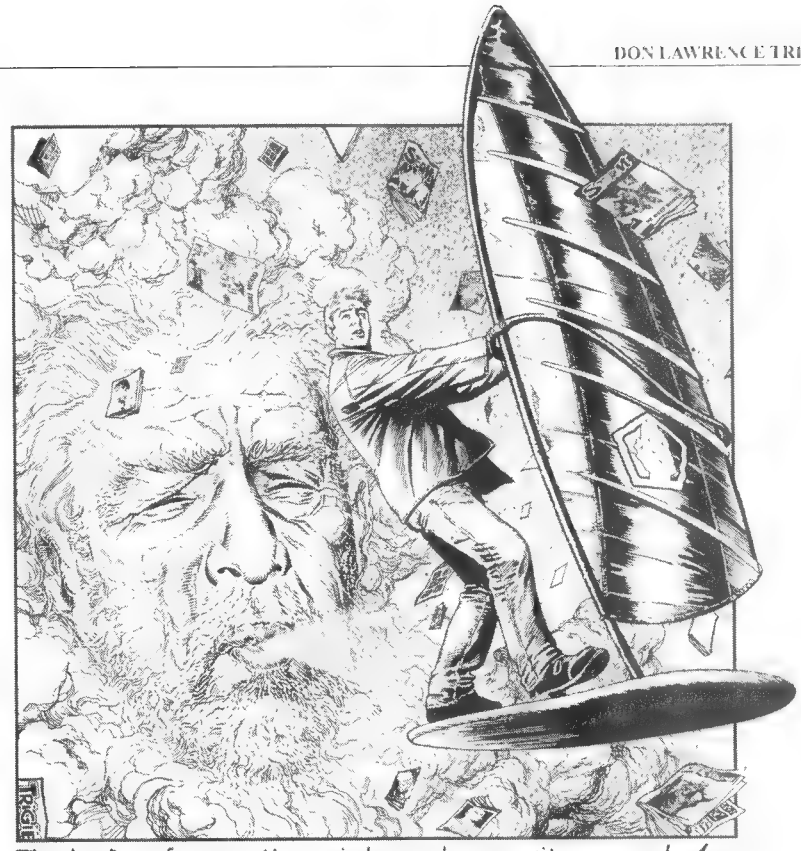
Thank heavens we were given the opportunity...

I cried shamelessly when I heard he'd died. I expect there'll be moments when I do again. But I've also smiled a lot remembering him. He has, after all, left a legacy few people in the world will ever equal.

And he was a man who was very well loved by a great many people.

Goodbye, Don.

Have a good trip.



Thanks, Don, for your time, wisdom and generosity. C Weston

Tribute by
CHRIS WESTON

Two weeks after his death, it's only now beginning to dawn on me that I won't ever see Don Lawrence again. I've just finished one of those all-too rare pages of artwork that I'm actually quite pleased with, and my initial response was to make that ten minute drive to Don's house in Jevington in order to show it to him.

It's painful to think he'll never be there to cast his critical eye over my efforts ever again. Of course, I can guess what his reaction would have been: he'd point out some dodgy bit of storytelling, or rubbish anatomy or something; I never got off scott-free. But that's probably why I continued to show him my work, even up to 15 years after I'd finished my time as his apprentice.

He was my definition of the perfect comics artist and I valued his opinion higher than anyone else's in this medium. He had no personal agendas, he had little time for industry politics, and he'd never bullshit you.

Above all he was simply a bloody good artist. One of the best, in fact. The equal to Hampson, Bellamy and Embleton. Personally, I had always favoured his work, even before I had the good fortune to meet him. It was a real pleasure just to sit and watch this master at work, listening to Bowie or Pink Floyd and breathing in that intoxicating cloud of exotic smoke that constantly accompanied him.

There was such a warm, lovely atmosphere around his house; you had Burmese cats snuggling up to you; Don's wife, Lis, kept us tanked up with tea and there were beautiful views of the Sussex countryside outside the window. We'd talk for hours on all topics, and I benefitted from his company, wisdom and experience. Golden days, indeed.

With his untimely death I've lost a friend, a mentor and my favourite artist all rolled into one. I feel literally heart-broken.

Many have wondered why Don's work is so little known outside of mainland Europe. I have no doubt: to be brutally honest, he wasn't best served by his choice of collaborator. Let's face it, would the **Storm** albums have sold in their millions if Don hadn't drawn them? Even the *Trigan Empire* stories squandered a terrific visual concept by descending into repetitious and cheesey plots.

His artwork was the best thing about both these strips. UK and US comic readers are far more writer-orientated and ill-prepared to put up with lacklustre scripts even if they are accompanied by stunning, fully-painted gorgeous art like Don's.

I helped introduce him to the work of writers like Alan Moore and Frank Miller, and dropped blatant hints he should be collaborating with people whose writing calibre matched his artistic ability. The fanboy in me would have killed to see Don illustrate something like Moore's *For the Man Who Has Everything* **Superman** book or a **Tom Strong** even. But it wasn't to be.

Don was happy producing work for his European audience and who can blame him? He had big sales, critical acclaim and genuine super-star status. His death even made the TV news in Europe – what comics creator could command that sort of attention over here?

Last week, I attended Don's burial at St Andrew's Church in his beloved home village of Jevington. After the funeral, his extended family of relatives and friends (which I feel proud to be a part of), convened round his house in Jevington. Pink Floyd was on the stereo; wine was consumed in vast quantities; people laughed and cried in equal amounts. It was a great party and typical of many I'd been to at the Lawrences' place, but with one major difference: Don's absence. That felt strange.

Lis mentioned I should take a look at his desk, which had been left untouched since his death:

There, next to his pencils and gouache paints, I found the card I drew him for his recent 75th birthday. Lis said Don really appreciated the drawing, and the knowledge of that moved me deeply. I've asked Dez to reproduce it here, in **CI**, as my tribute to Don, as I feel it captures everything I feel about our relationship. It's going to be strange living in a world without Don Lawrence.

Hopefully, I can keep some of his ideals alive by continually striving to do good work. I'll be be trying to impress him for the rest of my life. 'Bye, Don.

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Baffle us with comics questions, or save us with answers!

Billy's Boots: Tiger comics

Peter Georgallas via e-mail: peter.georgallas@btopenworld.com

I HAVE hundreds of **Billy's Boots** and **Tiger** comics in my attic which I used to collect as a young boy and they are in pretty good condition.

Are they worth anything now to anyone? Please advise.

Tiger *(launched on September 11, 1954 at a princely 3d, or 1.25p) kicked off with Roy of the Rovers as its star as "The Sport and Adventure Picture Story Weekly".*

As he thinks above (art by Ron Turner, although the regular artists were John Gillatt followed by Mike Western and, later on Tom Kerr), Billy Dane was transformed from an ordinary kid to a hotshot goal scorer thanks to boots belonging to Deadshot Keen, legendary 1920s centre forward for England. That the boots were hidden away in his Gran's attic is a different story... As is the question of how come a legendary footballer had feet the size of a schoolkid.

*He never had his own title but first appeared in **Tiger** in 1962 and went on to **Scorcher** (1970-74); then, when it merged, back to **Tiger & Scorcher** (1974-85), which, in turn, merged into being **Eagle & Tiger** (1985-86). **Roy of the Rovers** (1986) revived and revitalised the strip for a post-punk audience.*

*Despite its fantastic nostalgia value, 1960s **Tiger** issues had massive print runs (well over 300,000 a week), so they're not that scarce and generally can be picked up for around £2.50 a copy. I'd keep 'em if I were you.*

Freebies

Stephen McGowan via e-mail: SMcGowan@cmpinformation.com

IS THERE any way I can get hold of the comic strip that was in **The Face** – *The Freebies?*

*Unbelievably, **The Face** doesn't even appear to have its own website, short of an emap subscriptions offer, so they're out. You may get a direct reply from this mention but, failing that, scour second hand magazine shops and eBay.*

Superman

Gerry O'Keeffe via e-mail: xemnuthetitan@hotmail.com

I'VE got a question for you that has been bugging me for the last couple of years. Hopefully you or someone out there can help.

I remember back in the '70s reading a Superman story where he's shot by a kryptonite bullet. The only other part of the story I remember is the Man of Steel flying through an underground cavern when this occurs.

It was obviously **Action Comics** or **Superman**, but what issue? Maybe it never occurred and I'm delusional. Can anybody help?

Hopefully a reader can next issue, afraid we can't

Morrison man

Mark Shay via e-mail

I'VE been attempting to build up my collection of Grant Morrison-written comics since discovering his work through **New X-Men**.

The problem is I live in the States and I gather a lot of his early work has been for British comics titles.

Any chance of a checklist?

The good news is that, as you're on the Net, geography is no longer a restrictive factor. Through any internet dealer or auction house, you should be able to pick up most of the following fairly easily and, with the lesser known ones being British, they won't cost you an arm and a leg either.

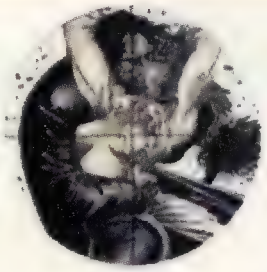
*A checklist follows, courtesy of **CI**'s latest in-house slave, Steve Turner...*

*1978-1980 **Near Myths** #2-5 (Galaxy Media, UK, script & art) Gideon Stargrave*

1979-1981 Captain Clyde *newspaper strip (script & art)*

*1979-1985 **Starblazer** (DC Thomson picture library; UK; scripts only)*
#15 Algol the Terrible
#28 Last Man on Earth
#45 Operation Overkill
#86 The Cosmic Outlaw
#127 The Death Reaper
#167 Mind Bender
#177 The Midas Mystery
#209 The Ring of Gofannon

*1985 **Warrior** #26 (us! Quality; UK) The Liberators (script only)*



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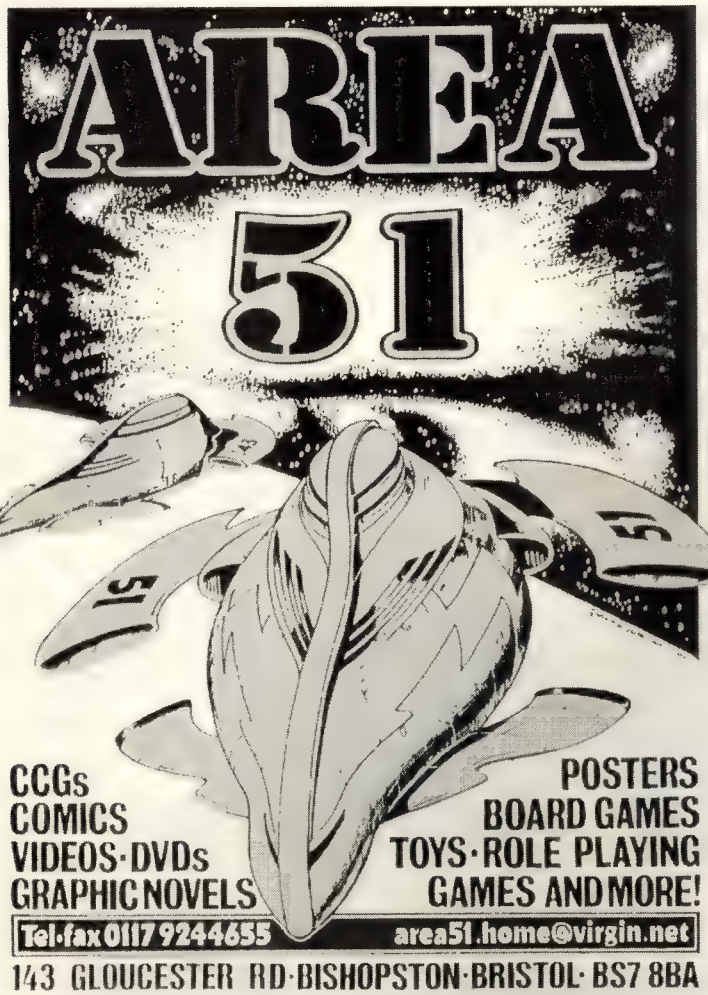

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1985 **Food For Thought** *(Abiogenesis, UK, script & art)*
Gideon Stargrave in Famine

1986-1987 **2000AD** *(IPC/Fleetway, UK, script only)*
Tharg's Future Shocks #463, 466, 469, 473, 475, 477, 479, 481-482, 491, 507-509, 514, 516

1986 **2000AD** Annual *(IPC/Fleetway, UK; script only)*
Tharg's Future Shocks

1986 **Spider-Man & Zoids** *(Marvel UK, script only)*
#19, 30-31, 36-37, 40-49

1986-1988 **Doctor Who Monthly** *(Marvel UK, script only)*
#118-119, 127-129, 139

1987-2000 **2000AD** *(IPC/Fleetway, UK) Zenith (script only)*
#535-550 Phase One, 558-559 Interlude One & Two, 589-606 Phase Two, 626-634/650-662/667-670 Phase Three, Winter Special 1989 *Interlude Three,* Yearbook 1989 *Interlude Four, 791-807 Phase Four, 2001 ZZZZenith.com*

1987 **Sunrise** *#1-2 (Harrier, UK) Abraxas (script only)*

1987 **Action Force** *(script only, Marvel UK weekly) #17*

1988 **Action Force Monthly** *(script only, Marvel UK) #3*

1988 **2000AD Sci-Fi Special** *(IPC/Fleetway, UK)*
Venus BlueGenes: The Pleasures of the Flesh (script only)

1988 **Heartbreak Hotel** *#1, 4 (Willy Prods, UK)*
Born Again Punk (script & art)

1988-1990 **Animal Man** *(DC Comics) #1-26 (script only)*

1989-1993 **Doom Patrol** *(DC/Vertigo) #19-63 (script only)*

1989 **Secret Origins** *(DC Comics) (script only)*
#39 Animal Man: The Myth of Creation
#46 JLA: Ghosts of Stone
#50 Flash of Two Worlds

1989 **Arkham Asylum: A Serious House on Serious Earth** *(DC Comics hardback) (script only)*

1989 **Legends of the Dark Knight** *#6-10 Gothic: A Romance (script only)*

1989-1990 **Trident** *#1-4 (Neptune; UK) St. Swithin's Day (script only)*

1990 **St. Swithin's Day** *(Neptune; UK) collection (script only)*

1990 **Crisis** *(Fleetway; UK) (script only)*
#46-49 The New Adventures of Hitler, #56-61 Bible John – A Forensic Meditation

1990-1991 **Revolver** *#1-7 continued in* **Crisis** *#55-56 Dare (script only; Fleetway, UK) Collected in US by Fantagraphics.*

1990 **Hellblazer** *#25-26 (script only)*

1990 **A1** *#3 (Atomeka; UK; script only) The House of Hearts Desire*

1990-1991 **Steed and Mrs Peel** *#1-3 (Acme UK/Eclipse USA)*
The Golden Game (script only)

1991 **Kid Eternity** *#1-3 DC/Vertigo (script only)*

1991 **Comic Relief** *(UK, Fleetway) (script only)*

1992 **Doom Force** *#1 (DC/Amalgam oneshot; script only)*

1992 **Fast Forward** *#1 (DC/Piranha; script only) A Glass of Water*

1993 **Sebastian O** *#1-3 (DC/Vertigo) (script only)*

1993-1995 **2000AD** *(Fleetway, UK)*
Judge Dredd (script only)
#842-853, 859-866, 928-937

1993 **2000AD** *(Fleetway, UK)*
Big Dave (co-scripted with Mark Millar)
#842-849, 869-872, 904-907,

1993-1994 **2000AD Specials** *(Fleetway UK) Janus: PSI Division (script only)*

1994 **2000AD Yearbook**
Young Dave (Fleetway, UK, co-scripted with Mark Millar)

1994 **The Mystery Play** *(DC/Vertigo) (script only)*

1994 **Spawn** *#16-18 (Image) (script only)*

1994 **Swamp Thing** *(DC/Vertigo) #140-143*
(co-scripted with Mark Millar)

1994-2000 **The Invisibles** *(DC/Vertigo, script only)*
#1-25 Volume One
#1-22 Volume Two
#12-1 Volume Three (pencils #2 p22)
Hexy- **Absolute Vertigo**

1995 **Kill Your Boyfriend** *#1 (DC/Vertigo, script only)*

1995 **Skrull Kill Krew** *#1-5 (Marvel) (script only)*

1996 **Warrior Spring Special** *(Quality, UK)*
The Liberators (script only)

1996 **Vampirella** *(Harris; script only) 25th Anniversary Special*

1996 **Flex Mentallo** *#1-4 (DC/Vertigo) (script only)*

1996 **Aztek: The Ultimate Man** *#1-10 (DC Comics; script only)*

1996-2001 **JLA** *(DC) #1-17, 22-41 (script only)*

1997 **JLA/WildC.A.T.S** *(DC Comics) (script only)*

1997 **Prometheus** *#1 (DC Comics) (script only)*

1997 **Weird War Tales** *#3 (DC/Vertigo; script only)*

1997-1998 **The Flash** *(DC) #130-138 (co-scripted with Mark Millar)*

1998 **DC 1,000,000** *#1-4 (script only)*

1999 **New Gods** *#1 (DC Comics) Secret File & Origins (script only)*

2000 **JLA Earth 2** *(DC; script only; hardback & paperback graphic novel)*

2000-2001 **Marvel Boy** *#1-6 (Marvel) (script only)*

2001-2004 **New X-Men** *(Marvel) #114-154*

2001 **Fantastic Four 1 2 3 4** *#1-4 (script only)*

2002 **The Authority** *#28 (DC/WildStorm) (script only – uncreditied)*

2002-2003 **The Filth** *#1-13 (DC/Vertigo, script only)*

Because of his popularity, most of Morrison's work has been collected into trade paperback editions, which may make it even easier and far less expensive for you to track down.

Purists may also be interested to know that Morrison wrote a complete Kid Marvelman story for **Warrior** *in 1983. Sadly, at that time, series author Alan Moore didn't want anybody else to write scripts about the Kimota clan so it remains unpublished.*

Whew!

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Panel Beaters

Comics International's monthly sampler of the best of the small press and indie comics scene

WHILE THE UK supply of post-adolescent comics has dwindled to a mere handful, by contrast the indie and small press market has mushroomed. So, in addition to **CI**'s classified announcements and small press reviews section, *Panel Beaters* gives readers a chance to sample some of the best of what's currently out there.

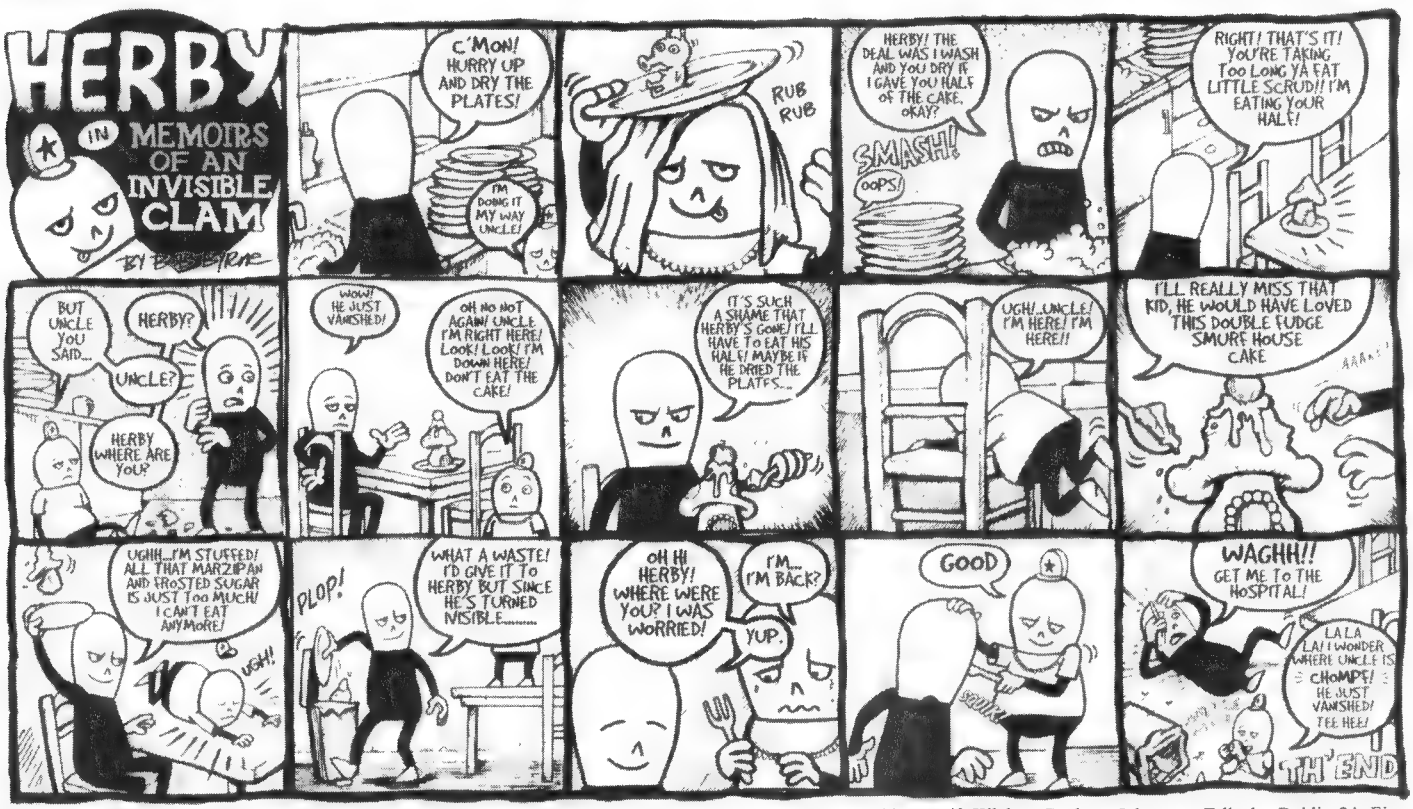
Each of the following strips is meant to be a standalone tale or gag that has been produced as an exclusive taster for **CI** readers, and is accompanied with full details about the comic, where you can find more of the writer and artist's work.

Would-be contributors to this section for future issues should note the proportions (printed size: 188mm wide, 120mm deep for double bank; 60mm deep for single bank) before submitting black and white copies of their work. You can email *comicsinternational@yahoo.com* for the Panel Beaters style sheet, or write to us at **Panel Beaters, Comics International, 345 Ditchling Road, Brighton BN1 6JJ.**

Compiled by Leonie O'Moore, Andy Smith & Dez Skinn

HERBY

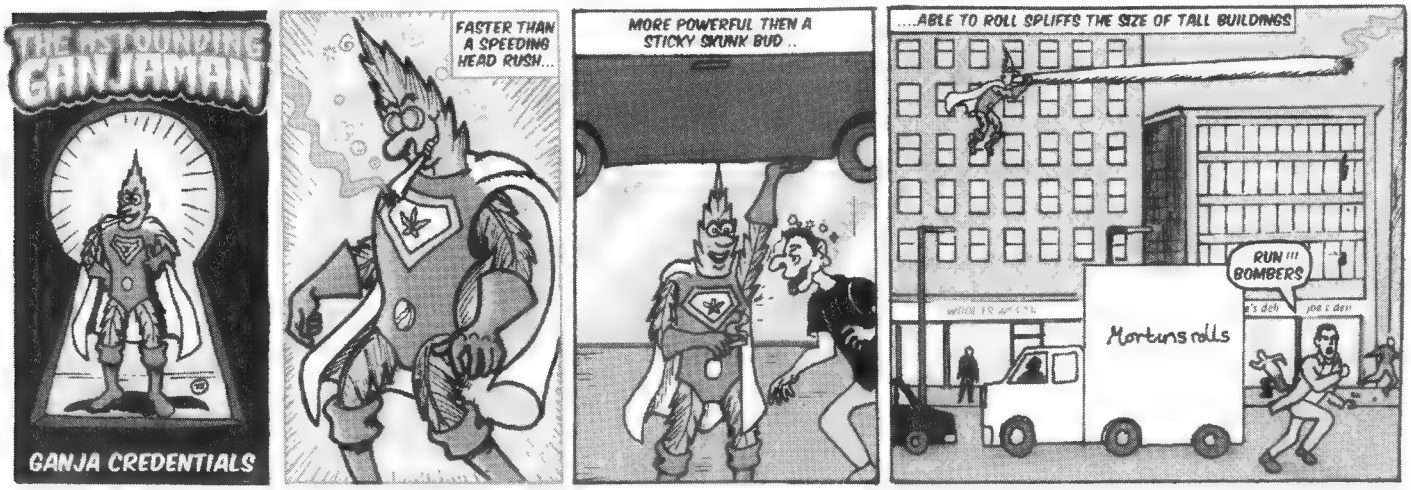
by Bob Byrne


HERBY
IN MEMOIRS OF AN INVISIBLE CLAM
BY BOB BYRNE
C'MON! HURRY UP AND DRY THE PLATES!
I'M DOING IT MY WAY UNCLE!
RUB RUB
HERBY! THE DEAL WAS I WASH AND YOU DRY IT. I GAVE YOU HALF OF THE CAKE, OKAY?
SMASH!
OOPS!
RIGHT! THAT'S IT! YOU'RE TAKING TOO LONG YA FAT LITTLE SCRUD!! I'M EATING YOUR HALF!
BUT UNCLE YOU SAID...
HERBY?
UNCLE?
HERBY WHERE ARE YOU?
WOW! HE JUST VANISHED!
OH NO NOT AGAIN! UNCLE I'M RIGHT HERE! LOOK! LOOK! I'M DOWN HERE! DON'T EAT THE CAKE!
IT'S SUCH A SHAME THAT HERBY'S GONE! I'LL HAVE TO EAT HIS HALF! MAYBE IF HE DRIED THE PLATES...
UGH!...UNCLE! I'M HERE! I'M HERE!!
I'LL REALLY MISS THAT KID, HE WOULD HAVE LOVED THIS DOUBLE FUDGE SMURF HOUSE CAKE
UGHH...I'M STUFFED! ALL THAT MARZIPAN AND FROSTED SUGAR IS JUST TOO MUCH! I CAN'T EAT ANYMORE!
UGH!
PLOP!
WHAT A WASTE! I'D GIVE IT TO HERBY BUT SINCE HE'S TURNED INVISIBLE.....
OH HI HERBY! WHERE WERE YOU? I WAS WORRIED!
I'M... I'M BACK?
YUP.
GOOD
WAGHH!! GET ME TO THE HOSPITAL!
LA LA LA! I WONDER WHERE UNCLE IS.
CHOMPS! HE JUST VANISHED! TEE HEE!
TH' END

HERBY appears in **MBLEH**. #1 & 2 currently available for £5 inc p&p (cheques to Bob Byrne). Write to him at: 43 Kilclare Gardens, Jobstown, Tallaght, Dublin 24, Eire.

THE ASTOUNDING GANJAMAN

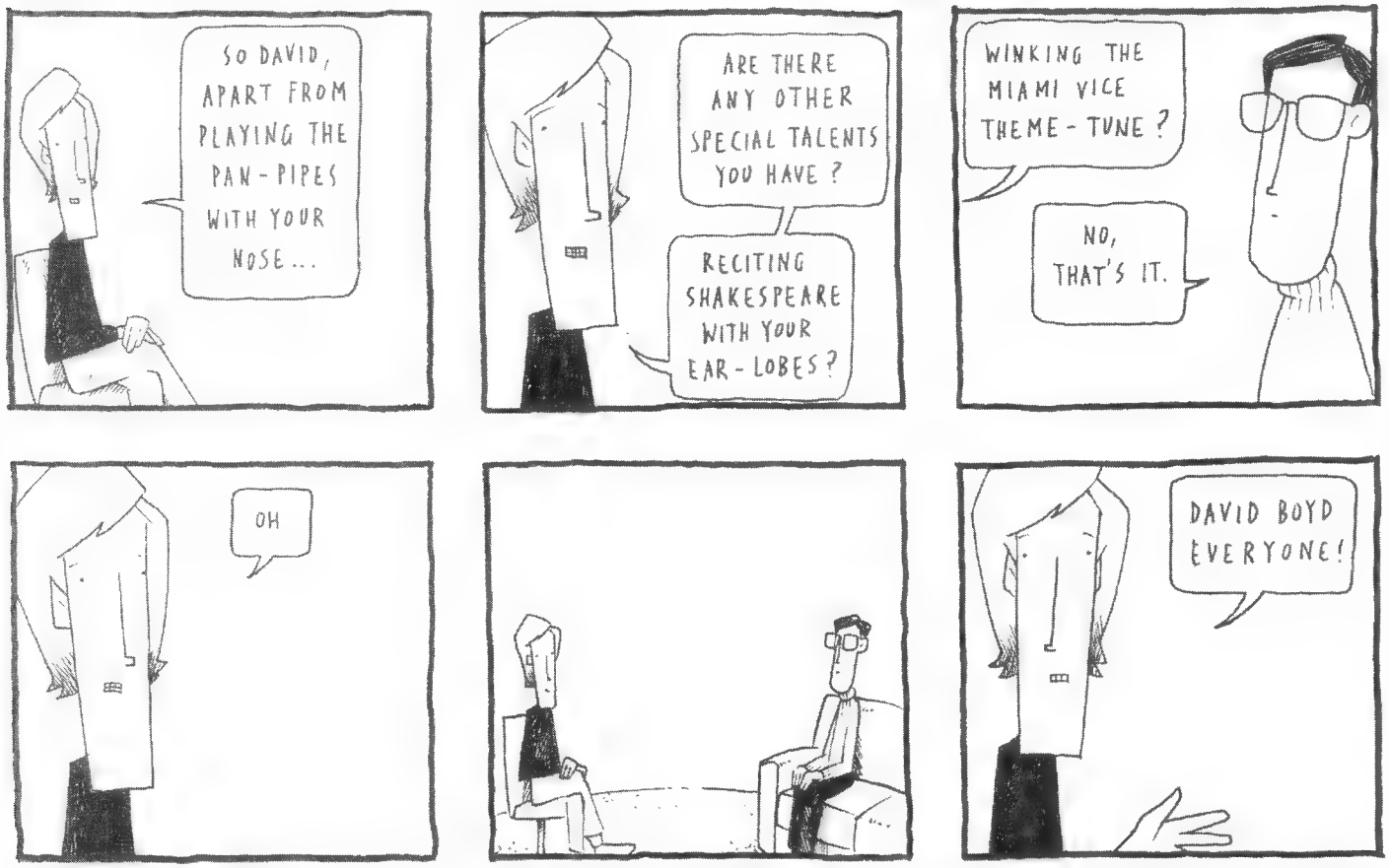
written and drawn by Jim Stewart


THE ASTOUNDING GANJAMAN
GANJA CREDENTIALS
FASTER THAN A SPEEDING HEAD RUSH...
MORE POWERFUL THEN A STICKY SKUNK BUD..
...ABLE TO ROLL SPLIFFS THE SIZE OF TALL BUILDINGS
RUN!!! BOMBERS
Mortuns rolls

THE ASTOUNDING GANJAMAN Vol 2 No 1 is available for £3.00 (inc p&p) from Numb Skull Comix. Write to: Jim Stewart, 71 Dornal Ave, Yoker, Glasgow G13 4HQ

THE RISE AND FALL OF TREVOR MELBURY

written and drawn by Adam Davidson


SO DAVID, APART FROM PLAYING THE PAN-PIPES WITH YOUR NOSE...
ARE THERE ANY OTHER SPECIAL TALENTS YOU HAVE ?
RECITING SHAKESPEARE WITH YOUR EAR-LOBES ?
WINKING THE MIAMI VICE THEME-TUNE ?
NO, THAT'S IT.
OH
DAVID BOYD EVERYONE!

THE RISE AND FALL OF TREVOR MELBURY is currently available for £1.00 from Smallzone. Write to them at: 10 Cleveland Ave., High Ercall, Telford, Shropshire TF6 6AH

A LIFE IN COMICS

by David Miles Golding

I KNOW IM NOT IN WORK TODAY, BUT I WILL JUST DROP IN 'SCARY PLANET COMICS' AND SAY HI.
DAVE
"HI EVERYONE."
HI DAVE.
HAY DAVE, CHECK OUT THE NEW COMICS INTERNATIONAL...PAGE 55.
PAUL
RICH
WHY.. IS THERE ANY THING GOOD INNIT ?
DAVE
OH MY GOD!! THEY PRINTED MY STRIP.. BAD TOMMY TOOTH HEAD.
WOW..I FEEL JUST LIKE ALAN MOORE.
AINT THIS COOL?
YEAH, THEY MUST HAVE BEEN SENT SOME CRAP TO HAVE PRINTED IT.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
TOMMY TOOTHHEAD BLOWS! YOU SHOULD HAVE SENT IN 'A LIFE IN COMICS'. THATS GREAT.
YEAH.. TOMMY SUCKS DAVE!
DAVE
PAUL
RICH
BUT I LOVE TOMMY TOOTH HEAD.
JUST SHUT UP AND DRAW THEM 'A LIFE IN COMICS' STRIP. AND PUT US INNIT. OR I'LL PISS ON YOUR HEAD!
DAVE
PAUL

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OPENS MIDDAY

Letters

CI, 345 Ditchling Rd, Brighton BN1 6JJ (comicsinternational@yahoo.co.uk)

THANKS to Pipex Internet, we've suffered a temporary change in our email address (see above). On acquiring our old service provider, CIX, they discovered accounts to be in disarray and, on December 29, cut them all off. That we had a live account, receiving upward of 300 emails a day – mostly spam – mattered little. Countless complaints were ignored and all ads, letters, queries and press releases sent to us since then have bounced back to senders. Thanks, Pipex, for a nice Christmas present. ...Dez Skinn/Editor

Boondocks alarm

Daniel Morris
235 Sturminster Road
Stockwood, Bristol BS14 8EW

BRUCE Paley's alarm over **The Washington Post**'s decision not to run an episode of Aaron McGruder's *Boondocks* is clearly heartfelt, but I feel his passion leads him to exaggerate *(Letters*, #167). This is surely an editorial decision and would only involve Freedom of Speech if McGruder was prevented by the State from publishing his ideas.

Neither is it a post-9/11 problem. Feiffer, Trudeau and Watterson have all had strips pulled or dropped by editors over the years. Any artist who submits work to an editor presumably reconciles themselves to the possibility that they may reject it. If McGruder is still working for **The Post** (not a paper I read) I suppose he can't view it as a vital issue of principle.

Similarly, to describe the cancellation of a junket for highly paid film stars as "Nazi-like" is foolishly over-excited. If Tim Robbins was hung on a hook and left to die for expressing his views (not a course I'm advocating, you understand) then that might reasonably be described as Nazi-like.

I'm a bit surprised at the complacency in Bruce's final paragraphs. He recalls the camps for Japanese-Americans in World War II, but why those and not the internment, detention without trial and 'special courts' in this country in the 1970s and '80s? Or the bizarre and surreal forms of censorship instigated by the State in the '80s and '90s – "we must starve them of the oxygen of publicity", etc. Bruce says, "at least here in the UK our freedoms have survived". So if the State hangs you up on flimsy or non-existent evidence, you can have the comfort of reading Steve Bell being quite put out by it.

I know this is a dramatic point at which I should end my letter, but I can't resist saying that Bruce's idea of a Colditz for cartoonists would be a great premise for a short strip. He really shouldn't give ideas like that away.

Baby, remember my name...

Rob Nott via e-mail:
jconstantine@claranet.co.uk

NICE to see another letter about me (**CI** #167)! At this rate my local comic shop owner is going to know who I am when I walk in through the door!

Now that's fame...

Reposte, thrust!

Saturnyne (address withheld just for Martin Gray's pleasure)

HOW delightful! Martin Gray has agreed to take offence at my colourful critique of Rob Nott's casual dismissings of the post-issue #42 **Sandman**. I stand accused of overreacting to a mere comicbook? Well, I'm sorry that I live in a bright, colourful and passionate world, where I'm free to express myself. But just for him I'll rein myself in this once...

So, to reiterate: I think anyone who casually dismisses any **Sandman** issues from #42 onwards in a gormless attempt at radicalism should be held up to public ridicule, before being vigorously sodomized by every issue from #1 to #41 in existence. OK, maybe that's a little extreme, so how about we use **Secret Wars** instead (including crossovers)? Of course, it should only be done calmly and rationally.

Despite my harsh words, I do actually like Rob Nott and his reviews; at least he makes the effort to be interesting.

I do so look forward to more of Martin's devastating repartee, but after that, I think it's time to let go and move on to more exciting issues, like 'Why do superhero comics begin to take on the characteristics of *Coronation Street* the longer you read them?'

I would again appreciate my email address not being published. Stalkers are so tiresome these days.

Private parts

Ian Murphy via e-mail:
IanMurphy2@aol.com

FOLLOWING Martin Gray's lambasting of Saturnyne last issue, I feel compelled to make two points.

First, he complains that Saturnyne keeps address details anonymous. Why shouldn't (s)he? As long as **CI** knows who the writer is and where they are from, what business is it of anyone else?

Why does anyone need to know a person's details, if the writer wishes them to be private? Does it elevate or diminish opinions if the writer is from Kent, Belgium or Glasgow? Does knowing where a person lives make a letter any more pertinent?

I can understand your criticism of the comments regarding the **Sandman** review; but to follow up with personal assaults and such patronising 'wit' seems to make you guilty of similar offences to those you accuse Saturnyne of.

Out with the old...

Peter Sidebotham
Congleton, Cheshire

I COMPLETELY concur with Richard Domar and his conclusion that the old Marvel universe is dead *(Comment,* **CI** #167). Long live the new! The old universe is totally unbelievable (that's if you could believe in men who can fly). Can anyone name ten Marvel characters who haven't died and then been reborn?

However, I don't think the whole universe should end in death and destruction – although it would make an interesting finale! It should, in my opinion, be relegated to graphic novel and reprint format, and the original comics phased out slowly.

This would allow the Ultimate line to be expanded to a maximum of ten titles, with any crossovers happening within those books; not as separate series.

I still have a great fondness for the original universe – the current **JLA/Avengers** team-up is the perfect example of the kind of graphic novel that should appear.

As for DC Comics, it's in the biggest mess I've ever seen! I thought with **Crisis on Infinite Earths** it had finally put its house in order. But then it invented hyper time – **Back to Earth**, etc.

Personally, I like the type of stories in **Warhammer** and **2000 AD**, where writers are not afraid to upset the applecart. Love the new take on an old fave with a female *Robo-Hunter!* Simple but effective.

In **Warhammer** the art on *Lone Wolves* is outstanding, and a few characters have emerged as stars in their own right (Stern, Darkblade, Kal Jerico, etc!). Can't say much for **The Megazine**: too many reprints for my liking.

Rob Barzilay has to be praised for his revival of Dan Dare! Perhaps a Trigan Empire title could follow? And while on the

Mike Kazybrid's COMIC CUTS

Script by Paul Kristian

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subject of reprints and revivals, pick up the new **Masters of the Universe** comic by Toontastic; excellent art and OK plot so far!

I recently wrote to Cartoon Books, enquiring about future **TV 21** reprints. None are planned, so get writing in, guys!

Plans are already afoot for collections of Don Lawrence's fantastic Trigan Empire.

Fantastic 4

Mark Badham-Moore via e-mail

JUST thought that as an avid radio listener I'd drop you a line about a couple of things that I've heard recently. First off on December 4 Radio 4's *Today* programme had an interview with Leo (Bash Street Kids) Baxendale, set in the Cartoon Art Trust Museum.

Also on Radio 4 there is a comedy series, ***Concrete Cow***, on Wednesday nights at 6.30 with quite a heavy bias towards comics and familiar comics characters in it. In fact the second episode, last week, had a very funny 'Batphone' sketch.

And may I suggest for a future *Pitfalls* column 'What Happened to UKCAC?' direct from its organisers Frank and Hassan?

25 cent comics

Michael Donaghue via e-mail:

IN reply to Stephen Holland's letter (**CI** #166): I don't mind paying 25p for the 25 cent comics, they are still bloody cheap.

I look forward to only paying 50p for my January **Avengers**!

Harvey Pekar hits town

Bruce Paley via e-mail: BPaley@compuserve.com

ON December 19, Harvey Pekar hosted a **Guardian**-sponsored London screening of *American Splendor*, the film based on his comicbook series of the same title. Following the presentation, Pekar conducted a Q&A session with the audience of around 75 people.

Among other things, Pekar revealed that there had been numerous attempts to film his stories over the past 20 years, but that would-be producers had never been able to raise the necessary funds. He went on to express his satisfaction with the film, and his surprise that it had done so well, winning prizes at the Cannes, Sundance, and Edinburgh film festivals.

When asked what he thought of the way he was portrayed by actor Paul Giamatti, Pekar said he was generally pleased with the depiction of himself, despite the fact that the two had only met briefly a few days before filming had begun.

When queried about the portrayal of his friend, cartoonist Robert Crumb who drew Pekar's first comics, Pekar explained that his intention was for Crumb to be portrayed more sympathetically than he had been in the Terry Zwigoff film about Crumb and his family. When he asked Crumb what he thought about his character, however, Pekar revealed that the cartoonist had been non-committal, although the two remain good friends.

This was not the case with David Letterman though, on whose television show Pekar had made some notable appearances. While he expressed his appreciation that Letterman's people had been kind enough to lend *American Splendor*'s producers footage of these, Pekar stressed that they refused to let them air the two most controversial episodes, in which Pekar had been critical of Letterman's sponsors, resulting in his being banned from future broadcasts. These were recreated in the film using actors, and Pekar revealed that Letterman was not keen to have him back as a guest.

The most curious revelation of all, perhaps, is that Pekar was once asked by Marvel to write **Howard the Duck**, an offer he declined.

Now officially retired from his well-chronicled job as a file clerk at a V&A hospital, Pekar announced that he will continue writing the **American Splendor** comicbook, and that Titan Books are to issue two anthologies of his work.

CI's early day contributor Simon Rogers was there. He took the enclosed photo of (left to right) Harvey Pekar, unknown girl, me and comics writer/artist Carol Swain!

Directory

An at-a-glance reference guide to everything that counts in comics

Internet Listings

Comics creators

Jessica Abel ..... www.artbabe.com
Neal Adams ..... www.nealadams.com
Kyle Baker ..... www.kylebaker.com
Leo Baxendale ..... www.reaper.co.uk/main.htm
Brian Bolland Art ..... www.velouria.com/Bolland
Mark Bright ..... www.mdbright.com
Eddie Campbell ..... www.eddiecampbellcomics.com
John Cassaday ..... www.johncassaday.com
Gene Colan ..... www.genecolan.com
Chuck Dixon ..... www.dixonverse.com
Will Eisner ..... www.willeisner.tripod.com
Warren Ellis ..... www.warrenellis.com
Phil Foglio ..... www.studiofoglio.com
Jon Haward ..... www.jonhawardart.com
Jeff Jones ..... www.jeffreyjones.com
Bob Layton ..... www.boblayton.com
Joseph Michael Linsner ..... www.linsner.com
Tom Lyle ..... www.tomlyle.com
Scott McCloud ..... www.scottmcloud.com
Grant Morrison ..... www.grant-morrison.com
Alex Ross Art ..... www.alexrossart.com
Dave Stevens ..... www.davestevens.com
William Stout ..... www.williamstout.com
Bryan Talbot ..... www.bryan-talbot.com
Barry Windsor-Smith .. www.barrywindsor-smith.com
Bernie Wrightson ..... www.berniewrightson.com

Comics publishers

Abstract Studios ..... www.strangersinparadise.com
AC Comics ..... www.accomics.com
Acclaim ..... www.acclaim.com/comics
AiT/Planet Lar ..... www.astronautsintrouble.com
Antarctic Press ..... www.antarctic-press.com
Archie Comic Publications .. www.archiecomics.com
Caliber Comics ..... www.calibercomics.com
Cartoon Books ..... www.boneville.com
Chaos! ..... www.chaoscomics.com
Cool Beans World ..... www.coolbeansworld.com
Com.X ..... www.comxcomics.com
CrossGeneration Comics ..... www.crossgen.com
Crusade Entertainment ..... www.shiweb.com
Dark Horse ..... www.darkhorse.com
DC Comics ..... www.dccomics.com
Drawn and Quarterly ... www.drawnandquarterly.com
Dynamic Forces ..... www.dynamicforces.com
Fantagraphics ..... www.fantagraphics.com
Harris Comics ..... www.vampirella.com
Heavy Metal ..... www.heavymetal.com
Knockabout Comics ..... www.knockabout.com
Marvel Comics ..... www.marvel.com
Northern Lightz ..... www.northernlightz.com
Oni Press ..... www.onipress.com
Quality/Warrior ..... www.comicsinternational.com
Sirius Entertainment . www.sirius.choiceoneonline.com
Todd McFarlane Productions .... www.spawn.com
Top Cow Comics ..... www.topcow.com
TwoMorrows ..... www.twomorrows.com
2000 AD www.2000ADonline.com
Viz (USA) ..... www.viz.com
Viz (UK) ..... www.viz.co.uk
WildStorm Comics ..... www.wildstorm.com

Manga and anime

AD Vision ..... www.advfilms.com
MVM ..... www.mvm-uk.co.uk

Downloadable software

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On-line auctions

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eBay ..... www.ebay.co.uk
Heritage Comics Auctions www.heritagecomics.com

NEAR MINT
THE NEWEST TRULY ONLINE AUCTION SYSTEM, DEDICATED TO THE COLLECTIBLE MARKETPLACE ..... www.near-mint.com

Fantasy art and books

THE DRAGONS GALLERY
'SHOP ON-LINE' FOR ORIGINAL COMIC ART, LITHOS, MANGA, FANTASY AND GOTHIC ART ..... www.thedragonsgallery.co.uk

Festivals and fairs

Amadora Festival (Portugal) www.bdamadora.com
Angouleme BD (France) ..... www.bdangouleme.com
Comic-Con International (San Diego, USA) ..... www.comic-con.org
Lucca Comics (Italy) ..... www.comune.lucca.it
Megacon (Florida, USA) .. www.megaconvention.com
Raptus International Festival (Norway) www.raptus.no
Scottish Comic, Card & Collectables Fair ..... e-mail: marts@redhotcomics.demon.co.uk
Wizard World (Chicago, USA) www.wizarduniverse.com

New and back issue dealers

Ace Comics ..... www.acecomics.net
Avalon Comics ..... www.avaloncomics.co.uk
Black Dog Comics ..... www.blackdog-comics.com

CHAOS CITY COMICS
AWARD-WINNING SITE. HIGH GRADE SILVER AGE ITEMS & DAVE GIBBONS ORIGINAL ART ..... www.chaoscitycomics.com

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"BRITAIN'S FAVOURITE COMIC-BOOK COMPANY" Over 250,000 items for sale ..... www.comic-biz.com

Comics 24-7.co.uk www.comics247.co.uk
Comics & Collectables www.comicsandcollectables.co.uk
Comics Forever ..... www.comicsforever.com

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Krypton Komics ..... www.kryptonkomics.com

MEGA-CITY COMICS
LARGEST GRAPHIC NOVEL CATALOGUE IN THE COUNTRY - FAST & EASY ONLINE SHOPPING ..... www.megacitycomics.co.uk

Mighty World of Comicana .... www.comicana.com

OBSCURE COMICS
FOR THOSE COMICS THAT YOU CAN'T FIND ANYWHERE. CHEAP TOO! ..... www.obscurecomics.com

Page 45 ..... www.page45.com

QUICKSILVER COMICS
THE SPECIALIST SILVER AND BRONZE AGE SITE. OVER 100,000 ITEMS LISTED, ALL WITH COVER IMAGES .. www.qscomics.com

SILVER ACRE COMICS
OVER 900,000 COMICS IN STOCK, 110,000 DIFFERENT ITEMS LISTED ONLINE ..... www.silveracre.com

Speeding Bullet ..... www.speedingbulletcomics.co.uk

On-line comics companies:

*By popular demand, **CI** now runs an at-a-glance overview of the major sites for on-line comics collectors and creators. Have your company listed for only £5 (US $8) a month. Bookable in 6-issue blocks, companies wishing to be included should send £30 or US $40 (UK: please add £5.25 to cover VAT) with trading name and website address.*

♦ *Major companies requiring bold and boxed entries should send £60 + £10.50 VAT per 6-issue series, US $80 (£10/$16 per issue) and may add three lines of descriptive copy. Cheques and international money orders should be made payable to Comics International and sent to:*
Internet Listings, Comics International, 345 Ditchling Rd, Brighton BN1 6JJ
Alternatively, payment can be made by credit card, fax: 0(11 44) 1273 566 333 or e-mail details to: comicsinternational@yahoo.co.uk

Retail Index: UK

Key to the abbreviations used:

imp	= air imported new issues	ind	= independent comics
back	= back issues stocked	u/g	= underground comix
gn	= graphic novels	prl	= peripherals/supplies
tpbk	= trade paperbacks	RPG	= role playing games
STO	= standing order service (new comics reserved)	CCG	= customisable card games
		merch	= trading cards, videos, t-shirts, posters, etc
s-p	= small press and fanzines		*Sorry, no websites, this is a shop guide*

When telephoning from outside the UK, drop the first 0 and replace with: 01144 (USA); 0044 (mainland Europe & Eire); 001144 (Australasia).

Central London

Avalon Comics, 143 Lavender Hill, Battersea, London SW11 5QJ. Mon-Thurs 10-5.45; Fri 10-6.30; Sat 9.30-5.30; Sun 11-3.30 (imp, back, gn, tpbk, STO, ind, prl, CCG, merch) 0207924 3609

Book & Comic Exchange, 14 Pembridge Road, Notting Hill Gate, London W11. Mon-Sun 10-8. Nothing legal refused! (back, ind, u/g) 0207229 8420

Comic Showcase 63 Charing Cross Road, London WC2H 0NE. Sun-Wed 10-7; Thurs-Fri 10-8; Sat 9.30-8 (imp, back, s-p, ind, u/g, merch, cartoon books, original art) 0207434 4349

Forbidden Planet Outlet Store, 71-75 New Oxford Street, London WC1A 1DG. Mon-Wed/Sat 10-6; Thurs-Fri 10-7 (low price book, comics, toys, videos and merch) 0207420 3666

Forbidden Planet Megastore, 179 Shaftesbury Avenue, London WC2H 8JR. Mon-Sat 9.30-7; Sun 12-6 (imp, back, gn, STO, s-p, ind, RPG, CCG, merch, sci-fi/fantasy, books, video/DVD, games, mags, toys) 0207420 3666

Gosh!, 39 Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3PH (opposite British Museum). Mon-Sun 10-6 (Thurs-Fri to 7) (imp, back, STO, ind, u/g, merch, foreign, largest range newspaper strip compilations in UK) 0207636 1011

Mega-City Comics, 18 Inverness Street, Camden Town, London NW1 7HJ. Mon-Sun 10-6 (Thurs-Fri to 7) (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, merch, film/TV, fantasy/horror, body art, subculture) 0207485 9320

Mighty World of Comicana, 237 Shaftsbury Avenue, London WC2H 8EH. Mon-Wed 10.30-6.30; Thurs-Sat 10-7; Sun 10-4 (imp, back, STO, ind, merch, film/TV/fantasy) 0207836 5630

Orbital, 9 Old Compton Street, London W1. Mon-Sat 10.30-7; Sun 11-5 (imp, back, gn, STO, manga, toys, Star Wars) 0207434 9363

Outer London

A Place in Space, 101 Church Street, Croydon, Surrey CR0 1RN. Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30 (imp, back, STO, ind, RPG, CCG, prl, merch, sci-fi, original art) 0208686 2400

Ashcan Ltd, 3 Eagle Star House, 299-301 High Street, Sutton, Surrey SM1 1LG. Tues-Wed/Fri 12-5; Thurs 9-6; Sat 10-5 (imp, back, STO, ind, merch) 0208770 3815

Atomic Comics, 1112 High Road, Chadwell Heath, Romford, Essex RM6 4AH. Mon-Tues 10.30-5.30; Wed 1-5.30; Thurs-Fri 10.30-6; Sat 10-6 (imp, back, gn, tpbk, STO, ind, u/g, prl, RPG, CCG, merch, film/TV, art books, Games Workshop, toys, kits) 0208597 8547

Black Angel Comics, Merton Abbey Mills, Watermill Way, Merton Abbey, London SW19 5WG. Sat-Sun 10-5 (imp, back, gn, tpbk, merch) 07771502618

Calamity Comics, 160 Station Road, Harrow, Middlesex HA1 2HR. Mon-Wed 10-6, (Thurs-Fri to 7); Sat 9.30-6 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, RPG, merch, fantasy film/TV, books, videos) 020 8427 3831

Epic Heroes, 21/23 Station Road, Edgware, Middlesex HA8 7JE. Mon-Sat 10-6. (imp, back, gn, tpbk, STO, RPG, CCG, merch, toys, posters, Transformers)

Forbidden Planet, 175 North End, Croydon CR0 1TP. Mon-Fri 10-6 (Thursday to 7); Sat 9.30-6. (back, gn, tpbk, STO, ind, u/g, CCG, merch) 020 8688 7190

Into the Void, 262 Streatham High Road, Streatham SW16 1HS. Mon-Sat 9.30-7; Sun 11-3. (imp, back, STO, merch, toys) 020 8677 7037

Krypton Komics, 252 High Road, Tottenham, London N15 4AJ (next to Tesco) Mon-Fri 10.30-6; Sat 10-6 Nearest Tube: Seven Sisters Road. (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind) 020 8801 5378 fax: 8376 3174

They Walk Among Us, 26 Red Lion Street, Richmond, Surrey TW9 1RW. Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30 (Thurs to 6); Sun 11-4 (imp, back, STO, ind, u/g, merch, fantasy/sci-fi/horror, subculture) tel/fax: 020 8948 8476

30th Century Comics, 18 Lower Richmond Road, London SW15 1JP. Mon-Wed 10.30-6; Thurs-Fri 10.30-7; Sat 10.30-6; Sun 11-5 (imp, back, STO, ind, u/g, merch, Gold/Silver/Bronze Age specialists, British comics/annuals, books) 020 8788 2052

South East

Ace Comics, 63/64 High Street, Colchester, Essex. Mon-Sat 10-5.30 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, RPG, merch) 01206 561912

The American Comic Shop, 1 Church Street, Chatham, Kent ME4 4BS (off High Street). Mon-Fri 10-5.30 (Tues until 5); Sat 9-5.30. (imp, back, gn, tpbk, STO, ind, prl, action figures) 01634 817410

Calamity Comics 2, 90 Queens Road, The Broadway, Watford WD1 2LA. Mon-Tues 10-5.30; Thurs/Fri 10-7; Sat 9.30-5.30 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, RPG, merch, fantasy film/TV, books, videos) 01923 249293

Cartoon Shop, 19 East Square, Basildon, Essex SS14 1HT. Mon-Sat 10-6 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, RPG, merch) 01268 534194

Central City Comics, 4 Eagle Street, Ipswich, Suffolk IP4 1JB. Mon-Sat 10-6 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, merch, foreign) 01473 233017

Chaos City, 20 Heritage Close, (off High Street), St Albans, Herts AL3 4EB. Mon-Thurs 10-5.30; Fri 10-7.30; Sat 9-5.30; Sun 12-4 (imp, back, gn, tpbk, STO, ind, prl, RPG, CCG, merch) 01727 838719

Comic Showcase, 19-20 St Clements Street, Oxford OX4 1AB. Mon-Sat 10-6 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, merch) 01865 723680

Comix-shop.co.uk, 7a High Street, Maidenhead SL6 1JN. Mon-Sat 10-6 (imp, back, STO, tpbk, gn, merch, CCG, toys) 01628 777998

David's Comic Shop, 5 Sydney Street, Brighton, Sussex BN1 4EN. Mon-Sat 9.30-5.45; Sun 11-4 (imp, back, STO, ind, u/g) 01273 691012

Daydream Nation Trading Cards at Hive, 6 Kensington Gardens, Brighton BN1 4AL. Mon-Sat 10-6 (CCGs, cards, sports, Ultra-Pro) 01273 687 877

Forbidden Planet, 60 Burleigh Street, Cambridge CB1 1DJ. Mon-Sat 9.30-6 (imp, back, STO, ind, u/g, CCG, merch, videos, sci-fi/fantasy books, film/TV magazines) 01223 301666

Forbidden Planet, 44 The Priory Centre, Dartford, Kent DA1 2HS. Mon-Wed 10.30-5.30; Thurs-Sat 10-5.30 (back, gn, ind, PRG, CCG, merch) 01322 224837

Incognito Comic Shop, 1-2 The Friars, Canterbury, Kent CT1 2AS. Mon-Fri 10-5.30; Sat 9-5.30; Sun 11-4 (imp, back, STO, ind, merch, film/TV) tel/fax: 01227 785898

Off World: The Sci-Fi Store, 142 Market Halls, Arndale Centre, Luton LU1 2TP. Mon-Sat 9.30-5 (imp, STO, s-p, CCG, merch, Star Trek/Wars, sci-fi collectables) 01582 736256

Phoenix Fantasy, 9 Market Street, Margate, Kent CT9 1EU. Mon-Sat 10-6 (imp, back, STO, ind, RPG, CCG, merch) 01843 224768

NEW **Planet Ace**, 324-325 Chartwell North, Top Floor, Victoria Plaza, Southend-on-Sea, Essex SS2 5SR. Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30 (imp, back, STO, ind, u/g, merch) 01702 613021

Slough Computers, 50 Village Shopping Centre, Slough, Berks SL1 1HP. Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30 (imp, STO, ind, cards, second hand computer games) 01753 521594

Speeding Bullet Comics, 43 Hermitage Road, Hitchin, Herts SG5 1BY. Mon-Fri 9.30-5.30 (Wed 10-5); Sat 9-5.30 (imp, back, gn, tpbk, s-p, merch, STO, CCG, action figures, original artwork, life-size Spidey mannequin for hire) 01462 451117

Time Trek, 46 High Street, Bromley, Kent BR1 1EG. Mon-Wed/Fri 9.30-5.30; Thurs 10-8; Sat 10-5.30; Sun 10-4 (imp, back, ind, gn, merch, STO, CCG, prl, sf TV/film) 020 8313 0677

Whatever Comics, 2 Burgate Lane, Canterbury, Kent CT1 2HH. Mon-Sat 10-5.30 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, merch, kits) 01227 453226

Whatever Comics, 5 Middle Row, High Street, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1TF. Mon-Sat 10-5.30 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, merch, model kits) 01622 681041

Midlands

Abstract Sprocket, 29 St Benedicts Street, Norwich, Norfolk NR2 4PF. Mon-Sat 10-5 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, merch) 01603 624410

Another World, 42/43 Main Centre (opposite Wilkinsons) Derby. Mon-Fri 9.30-5.30; Sat 9-5.30; Sun 12-4 (imp, back, STO, ind, RPG, merch, rock/film/TV memorabilia, computer games) 01332 206606

Another World, 23 Silver Street, Leicester LE1 5EU. Mon-Fri 10-5.30; Sat 9-5.30; Sun 12-4 (imp, back, STO, ind, u/g, RPG, merch, foreign, alchemy metalware, rock memorabilia) 01162 515266

Another World, 11 Market Street, Nottingham. Mon-Fri 9-5.30; Sat 9.30-5.30; Sun 12-4 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, RPG, merch, foreign, rock memorabilia, alchemy metalware) 0115 9484122

Another World, 52 Stafford Street, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent ST1 1JB. Mon-Fri 9.30-5.30; Sat 9-5.30; Sun 12-4 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, RPG, merch, rock memorabilia, alchemy metalware) 01782 279294 fax: 202381 Mail Order: 271750

Another World, 23 Victoria Street, Wolverhampton WV1 3NP. Mon-Fri 10-5.30; Sat 9-5.30; Sun 12-4 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, RPG, merch, rock memorabilia, alchemy metalware) 01902 717440

Comic Culture, The Mall, 257-259 High Street, Lincoln LN2 1HX. Mon-Fri 10-5; Sat 9-5 (imp, back, gn, tpbk, STO, prl) 01522 546611

Forbidden Planet, 31 Cross Cheaping, Coventry CV1 1HF. Mon-Sat 9.30-6 (Thurs to 7) (imp, back, STO, ind, u/g, RPG, CCG, merch, film/TV) 024 76229672

Forbidden Planet (FPI), 129 Middle Walk, Broadmarsh Centre, Nottingham NG1 7LN. Mon-Sat 9-6 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, merch, film/TV) 0115 958 4706

Forbidden Planet Superstore, 38 Priory Queensway, Birmingham B4 7LA. Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30 (Thurs-Fri to 6) (imp, back, gn, STO, ind, RPG, CCG, merch, books, games, mags, kits, toys, videos) 0121 236 3026

Ground Zero, 9 Toothill Lane, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire NG18 1NJ. Mon-Sat 9-5 (imp, back, STO, prl, CCG, merch, toys) 01623 622017

Nostalgia & Comics (FPI), 14-16 Smallbrook, Queensway, Birmingham. Mon-Thurs 9.15-5.45; Fri-Sat 9.15-6 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, merch) 0121 643 0143

Page 45, 9 Market Street, Nottingham NG1 6HY. Mon-Sat 9-6. (imp, back, gn, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, merch, manga) 0115 950 8045

Phoenix Comix, 29 Abington Square, Northampton NN1 4AE. Mon-Sat 9.30-5 (imp, back, STO, ind, merch, RPG, CCG, action figures) 01604 602311

Travelling Man, c/o Gamestation, 1st Floor, 6 East Street, Derby DE1. Mon-Sat 9-5 (imp, back, gn, tpbk, STO, prl, RPG, CCG, merch, action figures, fantasy books, film/TV) 0115 950 9231

Travelling Man, c/o Gamestation, 1st Floor, 16 Angel Row, Nottingham NG1 6HL. Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30 (imp, back, STO, ind, RPG, CCG, merch, action figures, miniatures) 0115 950 9231

North West

All-American, 102 Newport Street, Bolton BL3 6AB. Mon-Sat 10-6 (imp, back, gn, STO, merch, Star Wars, WWF, action figures, S/Age, videos, records, CDs) 01204 366553

Alpha Omega Comics, 33-35 Library Street, Wigan, Lancs WN1 1NN. Mon-Sat 9.30-5 (imp, back, STO, merch, videos) 07796 854644

Forbidden Planet, 92 Bold Street, Liverpool L1 4HY. Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30 (Thurs to 7) (imp, back, STO, ind, u/g, RPG, CCG, merch, film/TV, sci-fi/horror) 0151 707 1491

Forbidden Planet Megastore (FPI), 65 Oldham Street, Piccadilly, Manchester M1 1JR. Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30; Sun 12-5 (2 floors; imp, back, STO, RPG, CCG, merch, books, toys, film and TV tie-ins, manga) 0161 839 4777

Imagination Station, 41 Bank Street, Carlisle, Cumbria CA3 8HJ. Mon-Sat 9.30-5 (imp, back, STO, ind, merch)

Millennium Comics, 4 Church Road, Northwich, Cheshire CW9 5NT. Mon-Tues 10-5; Wed closed; Thurs-Fri 10-5.30; Sat 9-5 (imp, back, STO, s-p, RPG, merch, action figures, toys) 01606 49255

Moonwalk Collectables, Unit 15, Climax Works, Durham Street (off Station Road), North Redditch SK5 6YZ. Mon-Sat 10-6 (back, gn, tpbk, STO, ind, merch, Star Wars and Dr Who specialist, TV/film, British titles) 0161 431 6050

Thunderbooks, 332 Lytham Road, Blackpool FY4 1DW. Mon/Tues/Thurs-Sat (Sun June-Oct inc) 10-5.30; Wed 1-3.30 (imp, back, STO, ind, merch, media collectors' items) 01253 348321 fax: 407813

Thunderbooks II, 116 Friargate, Preston, PR1 9EE. Mon-Sat 10-5.30 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, RPG, merch) 01772 204287

Time Tunnel, 13 Earle Street, Crewe, Cheshire CW1 2BS. Mon and Wed-Sat 9.30-6 (imp, back, STO, merch, film/TV memorabilia, action figures, videos, model kits) 01270 215496

Twin Suns, 127 Blackburn Road, Accrington, Lancashire BB5 0AA. Mon-Sat 10-5 (imp, back, gn, STO, RPG, CCG, merch) 01254 386665

Worlds Apart (FPI), 58-60 Lime Street (city centre), Liverpool. Mon-Sat 10-6 (Fri 10-7) (imp, back, STO, ind, merch, film) 0151 707 0839

North East

Books N' Comics, Unit 15, Forbes Building, Linthorpe Road, Middlesbrough, Cleveland TS1 4AW. Mon-Sat 10-5.30 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, merch, fantasy and film magazines, Doctor Who/Star Trek) 01642 249143

Forbidden Planet (FPI), 30 Eastgate, The Headrow, Leeds LS2 7JL. Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30 (imp, back, LF film books, film/TV mags, posters, toys, kits, trading cards, stills, Star Trek/Doctor Who) 0113 242 6325

Forbidden Planet, 59 Grainger Street, Newcastle NE1 5JE. Mon-Sat 10-6 (imp, back, STO, ind, u/g, merch, film/TV mags, fantasy/sci-fi books, videos) 0191 261 9173

Forbidden Planet (FPI), 41 Dundas Street, Middlesbrough TS1 1HR. Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30 (Thurs until 7) (imp, gn, s-p, STO, ind, u/g, prl, RPG, CCG, merch, video, action figures, film/TV, manga) 01642 248889

Forbidden Planet (FPI), 12 Matilda, off the Moor, Sheffield. Mon-Fri 10-5; Sat 9.30- 5.30 (imp, back, s-p, ind, u/g, merch, original art, model kits, sci-fi/fantasy books, horror magazines, newspaper strip books) 0114 276 9475

The Last Picture Show, 38-39 The Lanes, The Oasis, Meadowhall Centre, Sheffield S9 1EP. Mon-Thurs 10-8; Fri 10-9; Sat 9-7, Sun 11-5 (imp, back, STO, ind, RPG, CCG, merch, film/TV and rock memorabilia) 0114 256 9604 fax: 255 3399

Millennium Comics, Stall 141, Warrington Indoor Market. Mon-Sat 9-5 (imp, back, STO, s-p, RPG, merch, action figures, toys) 01925 575657

Off-World Comics, 200 Park View, Whitley Bay, Tyne & Wear NE26 3QP. Mon-Tues/Thurs 10-5.30 (closed Wed);

Fri 10-6; Sat 10-5.30 (imp, back, STO, ind, CCG, merch) 0191 251 2288

Sheffield Space Centre, 33 The Wicker, Sheffield. Mon-Sat 10-5 (Wed closed) (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, merch, Star Trek) 0114 275 8905

Travelling Man, Unit 8/9, The Corn Exchange, Call Lane, Leeds LS1 7BR. Mon-Thurs 10-5.30; Fri-Sat 9-5.30; Sun 11-5 (imp, back, STO, ind, RPG, CCG, merch, action figures) 0113 242 7227

Travelling Man, 54 Goodramgate, York YO1 2LF. Mon-Sat 10-5.30 (imp, back, STO, ind, RPG, CCG, merch, action figures) 01904 628787

West Country

American Dream Comics, 72 Walcot Street, Bath BA1 5BD. Mon-Fri 10-5; Sat 10-5.30 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, merch, original art, hobby kits, CDs) 01225 424881

Area 51, 143 Gloucester Road, Bristol. Mon-Sat 10-5.30 (imp, back, STO, ind, u/g, RPG, merch, original art) 0117 924 4655

Automattic Comics, Unit 2, 17 Pickwick Road, Corsham SN13 9BQ. Mon-Tues 12-5; (Wed closed); Thurs-Sat 10-6 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, merch) 01249 701647

Collector's Choice, 45 Southgate Street, Gloucester GL1 1TX. Mon-Sat 9-5 (S/Age, British comics/annuals, vintage mags, toys, memorabilia) 01452 410232

Forbidden Planet, 30 Penn Street, Bristol BS1 3AS. Mon-Fri 9.30-5.30 (Thurs to 7); Sat 9.30-6 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, merch, film/TV mags, subculture) 0117 929 8692

Forbidden Planet, 43-45 East Street, Southampton SO14 3HN. Mon-Fri 9.30-5.30 (Thurs to 6); Sat 9.30-6 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, merch, film/TV) 023 80230991 fax: 230996

Ian's Books & Comics, 195a Albert Road, Southsea, Portsmouth PO4 0JP (next to Tesco). Mon-Tues/Thurs-Fri 10.30-5.15 (Wed closed); Sat 10-5.15 (imp, back, tpbk, STO, s-p, prl, toys) 023 92422731

Into the Void, 11 Rodbourne Road, Swindon SN2 2AG. Mon-Sat 9-5 (imp, back, STO, CCG, merch) 01793 434363

Kaboom, 65 High Street, Totnes, Devon TQ10 9PU. (new, back, action figures, t-shirts, board games, RPG, import computer games, mail order) 01803 863049

Kathies Comics, Unit BG29, Broadmead Gallery, The Galleries Shopping Centre, Bristol BS1 3XB. Mon-Wed/Fri-Sat 9-5.30; Thurs 9-6; Sun 11-5.30 (imp, back, gn, tpbk, STO, ind, prl, CCG, merch) 0117 922 1170

Kathies Comics, 20 Market Avenue, Plymouth, PL1 1PH. Mon-Fri 9.30-5.30; Sat 9-5.30 (imp, back, gn, tpbk, STO, ind, prl, CCG, merch) 01752 257800

Paradox Comics, 17 High Street, Poole, Dorset BH15 1AB. Mon-Fri 10.30-5; Sat 10-5 (imp, back, gn, STO, ind, merch, videos) 01202 661346

Purple Haze, 38 Eastlake Walk, Drakes Circus Shopping Centre, Plymouth, Devon PL1 1BX. Mon-Fri 10-5.30; Sat 9-5.30 (imp, back, STO, ind, u/g, merch, film, TV, sci-fi/horror/genre books, videos, Star Trek/Wars, cassettes/CDs) 01752 254136

Wonderworld, 540 Christchurch Road, Boscombe, Bournemouth, Dorset. Mon-Sat 9-5.30 (imp, back, STO, ind, CCG, merch, film/TV/media, beanie babies) 01202 394918

Wales

Cardiff Fantasy Centre, 1st Floor, Jacobs Market, West Canal Wharf, Cardiff. Sat 9.30-4.30 (imp, back, STO; established over 20 years) 029 206 58184 (eves)

Comix Shoppe, 13 Shoppers Walk, Swansea SA1 3AY. Mon-Fri 10-5; Sat 10-5.30 (imp, back, STO, ind, u/g, RPG, CCG, merch, anime, Games W/shop) 01792 642097

Forbidden Planet (FPI), 5 Duke St, Cardiff. Mon-Sat 10-5.30 (imp, back, STO, ind, u/g, merch, sci-fi fantasy/horror books, Star Trek/Wars) 029 202 28885

Negative Zone, Provision Market Gallery, High Street, Newport, Gwent NP9 1DD. Mon-Sat 9.30-5 (imp, back, gn, STO, s-p, ind; established for 11 years) 01633 222159

Scotland

Asylum Books & Games, 29 Adelphi, Aberdeen AB11 5B2. Mon-Sat 10-6 (Mon/Thurs to 8); Sun 12-5 (imp, back, STO, new/second hand RPG, CCG, books, original art) 01224 574637

Black Hole Comic Shop, Unit 3, 5 Victoria Road, Dundee DD1 1ER. Mon-Thurs 10-5; Fri-Sat 10-5.30 (imp, back, STO, ind, second hand records, CDs, videos) 01382 221037

City Centre Comics, 51 Parnie Street, Glasgow G1 5LU. Tues-Sat 10-5 (back) 0141 552 2208

Forbidden Planet (FPI), 12 Schoolhill, Aberdeen AB10 1JX. Mon-Fri 10-6 (Thurs until 7); Sat 9.30-5.30; Sun 12-5 (imp, gn, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, prl, CCG, merch) 01224 622131

Forbidden Planet (FPI), 40-41 South Bridge, Edinburgh EH1 1LL. Mon-Wed 10-5.30; Thurs 10-6.30; Fri-Sat 10-5.30; Sun 12-5. (imp, STO, s-p, ind, merch, foreign) 0131 558 8226

Forbidden Planet (FPI), 168 Buchanan St, Glasgow G1 2LW. Mon-Sat 10-5.30; Sun 12-5 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, merch) 0141 331 1215

Justice Comics, Unit 36, The Arcade, Stirling FK8 1AX. Mon-Sat 10-5 (imp, back, STO, ind, merch) 01786 447687

Kapow!, 28 Allison Street, Govanhill, Glasgow G42 8NN (off Pollokshaws Road). Tues-Sat 11-6 (buy and sell back, gn, ind, mags, videos, DVDs, new and second-hand books, merch) 0141 4241600

Plan 9, 9 Rosemount Viaduct, Aberdeen AB25 1NE. Mon-Sat 10-5 (Thurs to 6); Sun 1-4. (imp, back, STO, ind, RPG, CCG, WWF, merch, sci-fi) tel/fax: 01224 624467

Red Hot Comics, Block D Unit 7, Glenwood Business Park, Glenwood Place, Glasgow G45 9UH. Sat 11.30-6; Sun 12-5 (imp, back, gn, tpbk, STO, ind, prl, CCG, merch) 0141 630 0049

Northern Ireland

NEW **Crosshatch**, Unit 8, Smithfield Market, Belfast BT1 1JD. Mon-Fri 10-5; Sat 10-5.30 (original art, prints, autographs, cover recreations) 07739 871415

Forbidden Planet (FPI), 47 Winetavern Street, Belfast BT1 1JQ Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30 (imp, back, STO, ind, u/g, merch) 028 90438744

Planet Ace Derry, 33 Shipquat St, Derry, Londonderry BT48 6DF. Mon-Sat 10-6 (imp, back, gn, tpbk, STO, ind, prl, RPG, CCG, merch) 02871 369787

Retail Index: USA

When telephoning from outside the USA, include the bracketed 00. Out-of-town US calls begin with the 1 prefix only. The following is a fraction of the estimated 3,000+ US comics stores.

Alabama

Optic Nerve, 1930 12th Avenue South. Birmingham, AL 35205 (film, newsstand, ind) (00)1 205 933 2787

Alaska

Bosco's in Spenard, 2606 Spenard Road, Anchorage 99503. Mon-Sat 11-8, Sun 12-6 (new, back, CCG, RPG, cards, anime, merch) (00) 1 907 274 4112

Bosco's Diamond Centre, 800 East Diamond Boulevard, Anchorage 99577. Mon-Fri 10-9; Sat 10-6; Sun 12-5 (new, back, CCG, RPG, cards, anime, games, Star Wars/Trek) (00) 1 907 344 3963

Bosco's in Eagle River, 11432 Business Boulevard, Eagle River. Mon-Sat 12-8, Sun 12-5 (new, back, CCG, RPG, cards, merch) (00) 1 907 696 5166

Arizona

Lost Dutchman, 747 West Camelback Road, Phoenix, AZ 85013. Mon-Sun 10-7. (new, back) (00)1 619 278 0371

California

Comickaze, 5525 Clairemont Mesa Boulevard, San Diego, CA 62117-2342. Mon-Fri 11-7; Sat 11-6; Sun 12-6 (new, back, CCG, merch)(00)1 858 278 0371

Comix Experience, 305 Divisadero Street, San Francisco, CA 94117. Mon-Sat 11-7; Sun 12-5 (new, back) (00)1 415 863 9258

Flying Colors Comics, 2980 Treat Blvd, Concord, CA 94518. Mon-Sat 11-7 (Fri until 8); Sun 12-6 (new, back, ind, cards, merch) (00)1 510 825 5410

Lee's Comics, Inc., 1020-F N Rengstorff Avenue, Mountain View, CA 94043. Mon-Sun 10-9 (new, back: 1930s to date, anime, manga, s-p, adult, merch) (00)1 650 965 1800

Lee's Comics, Inc., 2222 South El Camino Real, San Mateo, CA 94403. Mon-Sun 10-9, (new, back: 1930s to date, anime, manga, adult, s-p, merch) (00)1 650 571 1489

Meltdown Comics & Collectibles, 7522 Sunset Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90046 (toys, comics, books) (00)1 323 851 7223

Stand-Up Comics, 10020 San Pablo Avenue, El Cerrito, CA 94530. Mon-Fri 11 7; Sat-Sun 11-6 (new, back, cards, anime, CCG, merch) (00)1 510 525 3344

Third Planet, 3822 Sepulveda Boulevard, Torrance, CA 90505. Sun-Thurs 11-8; Fri + Sat 11-9 (new, ind, back, CCG, RPG, GW, sci-fi/fantasy, anime, merch) (00)1 310 791 6227

Hawaii

Gecko Books & Comics, 3613 Waialae Avenue, Honolulu, 96816. Mon-Sun 9-9 (new, back, cards, toys, merch) (00)1 808 732 1292

Illinois

Comic Kingdom, 5941 W Irving Park Road, Chicago, IL 60634. (new, back) (00)1 773 545 2231

Louisiana

Comic Cosmos, 343 W Esplanade Avenue, Kenner, LA 70065. Mon-Thur 11.30-7, Fri-Sat 11-7.30, Sun 12-5 (new, back, cards, CCG, toys, anime) (00)1 504 286 0039

Crescent City Comics & Cards, 6111 Elysian Fields, New Orleans, LA 70122. Mon-Sat 11-7, Sun 12-6 (new, back, cards, CCG, RPG, anime) (00)1 504 286 0039

More Fun Comics, 8200 Oak Street, New Orleans, LA 70118. Tues-Sat 11-7, Sun-Mon 12-6 (new, back, cards, CCG, merch, toys, CDs) (00)1 504 865 1800

Maine

Casablanca Comics, 151 Middle Street, Portland, ME 04101. Mon-Sat 10-9, Sun 12-7 (new, back, cards, CCG, RPG, merch, art) (00)1 207 780 1676

Casablanca Comics, 778 Roosevelt Trail, Windham, ME 04062. Mon-Fri 11-7, Sat 10-6, Sun 12-5 (new, back, CCG, RPG, merch)(00)1 207 892 0056

Massachusetts

Comicopia, 464 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, Massachusetts 02215. Mon-Sun 11-7 (Wed 10-8) (new, merch, CCG, manga, tpbk)(00)1 617 266 4266

Minnesota

Uncle Sven's Comic Shoppe, 1838 St Clair Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55105. Mon-Fri 3-6, Sat 11-4 (new, back, tpbk, gn, videos, action figures, CCG, RPG; est 19 years) (00)1 651 699 3409

New York State

Earthworld Comics, 327 Central Avenue, Albany, NY 12206. Mon-Wed 11-6; Thur-Fri 11-7, Sat 11-6, Sun 12-5 (new, back, ind, manga/anime, cards, merch) (00)1 518 465 5495

Forbidden Planet (**FPI** associate), 840 Broadway (at 13th St, NY 10003. Mon-Sat 10-10; Sun 12-10. (new, ind, back, RPG, merch, fantasy) (00)1 212 473 1576

Jim Hanley's Universe Ltd, 4 West 33rd Street (opposite Empire State Building), NY 10001. Mon-Sat 9am-11pm; Sun 10-9. (Everything to do with comics) (00)1 212 268 7088

Jim Hanley's Universe Ltd, 325 New Dorp Lane, Staten Island, NY 10306. Mon-Sun; 12-9. (Everything to do with comics) (00)1 718 351 6299

Midtown Comics, 200 West 40th Street, NY 10018 (00)1 212 302-8192

Ohio

The Laughing Ogre, 4258 North High Street, Columbus, Ohio 43214. Mon-Sat 10-9; Sun 12-5 (new, back, cards, merch) (00)1 614 267 6473

Oklahoma

Time Warp, 588 SE Washington Street, Bartlesville, OK 74006 (new, back, cards, games, toys, CDs, sci-fi/fantasy) (00)1 918 335 3373

Pennsylvania

Comic Castle, 17 West Fourth Street, Williamsport, PA 17703 Mon-Sun 10-9 (new, back) (00)1 717 322 8763

Golden Eagle, Berkshire Square, 1159 Berkshire Boulevard, Wyoming, PA 19610 (new, back, games, CCG, cards, Star Wars/Trek) (00)1 610 376 8255

Golden Eagle, Fairgrounds Square Mall, Reading, PA 19605 (new, back, games, CCG, cards, Star Wars/Trek) (00)1 610 921 3160

Tennessee

Collector's World, 1511 E Main Street, Murfreesboro, TN 37130. Open all week (new, back, CCG, merch, cards, CDs) (00)1 615 895 1120

Collector's World, Hickory Plaza South Central, 5751 Nolensville Road, Nashville, TN 37211. Open all week (new, back, CCG, merch, cards, CDs) (00)1 615 895 1120

Collector's World, 10820 Kingston Park #10, Knoxville, TN 37922 Open all week (new, back, CCG, merch, cards, CDs) (00)1 423 675 6830

Collector's World, 4006 Granny White Park, Nashville, TN 37204 (new, back, CCG, merch)(00)1 615 385 8136

Texas

Cliff's Comics, 2205 West Berry Street. Fort Worth, TX 76110. (new, back, cards, merch) (00)1 817 927 7172

Collectible Heroes, 502 West Calton Road #307, Laredo, TX 78041. Mon-Wed 2-7.30; Thurs-Sat 11.30-7.30 (new, back, cards, merch) (00)1 956 791 8428

Dragon's Lair Comics & Fantasy, 616 West 34th Street, Austin, TX 78705 (new, back, games, anime, miniatures, prl) (00)1 512 454 2399

Virginia

Thore Comics, 3514 Oaklawn Boulevard, Hopewell, VA 23860. Mon-Sat 11-7, (new, back, Silver Age, sci-fi, M:TG, cards, vinyl)(00)1 804 458 9561

Trilogy Shop, 700 E Little Creek Road, Norfolk, VA 23518. Mon-Fri 11-7, Sat 10-7, Sun 12-6 (new, back, merch) (00)1 757 587 2540

Wisconsin

Lost World of Wonders, 6713 West Oklahoma Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53219 (00)1 414 328 4651

Direct Market Retailers:

***Comics International**'s Retail Index is THE international retail reference source for collectors, creators, publishers and journalists. Through it you can reach over 40,000 dedicated readers each issue for only £6 (US $10) a month! Bookable in 6-issue blocks, retailers wishing to be included should send US $60 or £36 (UK: please add £6.30 to cover VAT @ 17.5%) plus shop information as detailed on previous page to:*

Retail Index, Comics International, 345 Ditchling Road, Brighton BN1 6JJ, England

Cheques and international money orders should be made payable to Comics International. Alternatively, payment can be made by credit card, fax: 0(11 44) 1273 566 333 or e-mail: comicsinternational@yahoo.co.uk

The letters **(FPI)** after various entries indicates that the company is part of **Forbidden Planet International Ltd**

Retailers: International

Australia

Arcadia Unbound, 267 Forest Road, Hurstville, NSW 2220. Mon-Fri 10.30-7, Sat 10-4, Sun 12-3 (imp, back, manga. merch, CCG) (0061) 2 9585 1489

Books & Bounties/Comics Haven, 157a Charters Towers Road, Townsville, Queensland 4812. Mon-Sat 9-6 (imp, back, gn, merch, RPG, CCG) (0061) 7 4779 2408

Fan Attic, 1st Floor, 91 Elizabeth Street, Brisbane, Queensland 4002. Mon-Sun 9.30-5.30 (toys, Star Wars, sci-fi collectibles) (0061) 7 3221 1420

Kinda Lotsa Comics and Stuff, Shop 4, 503-511 King Street, Newtown, Sydney, NSW. Mon-Sat 10.30-7.30 (back, toys, merch)(0061) 2 9565 1054

Known Space Books, 1st Floor, 108 Gawler Place, Adelaide, SA 5000. Wed-Sat 12-6 (US/UK back) (0061) 8 8223 4304

Phantom Zone, 23 Anderson Street, Chatswood, NSW 2067. Mon-Fri 9-6, Sat-Sun 9-4 (imp, back, merch, RPG) (0061) 2 9411 3709

Phantom Zone, 198 Mann Street, Gosford, NSW 2250. Mon-Fri 9-6, Sat-Sun 9-4. (imp, back, merch, RPG) (0061) 2 43 25 4599

Phantom Zone, 207 George Street, Liverpool, NSW. Mon-Fri 9-6, Sat-Sun 9-4. (imp, back, merch, RPG) (0061) 2 9601 2622

Phantom Zone, 285 Hunter Street, Newcastle, NSW. 2300. Mon-Fri 9-6, Sat-Sun 9-4. (imp, back, merch, RPG) (0061) 2 4929 5717

Phantom Zone, 101a Argyle Street, Parramatta, NSW 2150 Mon-Fri 9-6; Sat-Sun 9-4 (imp, back, books, merch, RPG) (0061) 2 9891 1848

Phantom Zone, 268 Crown Street, Wollongong, NSW. 2500. Mon-Fri 9-6, Sat-Sun 9-4 (imp, back, gn, merch, RPG) (0061) 2 4228 7393

Austria

Comic Treff, Getreidemarkt 2-4, 1010 Vienna. Mon-Fri 10-7, Sat 10-1 (imp, back, gn, CCG) (0043) 11 586 76 27

Belgium

Forbidden Zone, 25 Rue de Tamines, 1060 Brussels. (3 floors; imp, back, merch, US/French, STO, toys) (0032 2) 534 63 67 (fax 538 24 52)

Canada

Connection MD, 1539 Van Horne Avenue, Montreal, Quebec H2V 1L4. Mon-Sat 11-6 (new, merch, back, CCG) (00)1 514 948 2627

Dragon Lady Comics & Paper Nostalgia, 609 College Street, Toronto, Ontario M6G 1B5. (00)1 416 536 7460

Little Shop of Heroes, 160 Wallace Avenue, South Listowel, Ontario N4W 1X9 (00)1 519 291 2281

Silver Snail Comic Shop, 367 Queen Street West, Toronto M5V 2A4. Mon-Wed 10-6; Thurs-Fri 11-8; Sat 10-6; Sun 12-5 (00)1 416 593 0889

France

Album, 67 boulevard St Germain, 75005 Paris. Mon-Sat 10-8; Sun 12-7 (imp, back, gn) (0033) 53 10 00 60

Album, 6 rue Dante, 75005 Paris. Mon-Sat 10-8; Sun 12-7 (imp, back, gn) (0033) 43 54 67 09

Alpha Omega, 25 rue de la Clef, 59800 Lille. Mon 2.30-7.30, Tue-Sat 10.30-12.30/2.30-7.30 (imp, back, French, merch, trading/gaming cards, toys, RPG, Wars/Trek, B5, L5R) (0033) 320 319 375

Astro City, 22 rue Masurel, 59800 Lille. Mon 3-7.30; Tue-Sat 10-12.30, 2-7.30 (imp, manga, cards, merch, kits) (0033) 320 55 1010

Impact Comics, 64 rue Condorcet, 75009 Paris. Mon-Sat 11-7.30 (imp, back, merch, CCG)(0033) 42 80 30 10

L'Antre des Dragons, 56 rue de Loup, 33000 Bordeaux. Mon-Sat 10-1/2-7 (imp, manga, gn, RPG, CCG, merch) (0033) 55 65 17378

Les Nageurs de Sable, 14 rue Courteline, 37058 Tours. Mon-Sat 11-1/2-7 (imp, back, cards, merch) (0033) 2 47 39 52 40

Pulps, 14 bld Morland, 75004 Paris. Mon-Sat 11-7 (imp, back, RPG) (0033) 1 42 72 55 25

Germany

Black Dog Comics, Rodenberg Strasse 9, 10439 Berlin. Mon-Fri 11-6.30, Sat 11-2 (imp, back, gn, t/cards) (0049) 30 4473 6486

Grober Unfug, Zossenerstrasse 32-33, 10961 Berlin. Mon-Sat 11-7 (imp, back, gn, CCG, merch) (0049) 30 6940 1490

Greece

Metropolis Comics, 94 Metropoleos St, 54622 Thessaloniki. Mon-Sat 10.30-3.30/7.30-11.30 (imp, back, gn, RPG, CCG, merch) (0030) 3 193 7775

Solaris, 6 Botasi Str, 10682, Athens. Mon-Sat 9-3.30/5-8.30 (imp, back, gn, merch) (0030) 1 384 1065

Holland

Henk Lie's Comics & Manga Store, Zeeduk 104, 1012BB Amsterdam. Mon-Sat 11-6; Sun 11-9 (imp, cards, merch, CCG) (0031) 20 421 3688

Hungary

Troll Kepregenyta'r, Terez Krt 13, Budapest 1067. Mon-Fri 10-6, Sat 10-1(imp, manga, gn, RPG, CCG, merch) (0036) 1 322 6026

Irish Republic

Forbidden Planet (FPI), 5-6 Crompton Quay, Dublin 2. Mon-Sat 10-6 (Thurs 10-7); Sun 12-5 (imp, back, ind, merch, u/g, UK, gn, STO) (0035) 3167 10688

Sub-City Comics, 2 Exchequer Street, Dublin 2. (imp, back, gn, tpbk, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, prl, RPG, CCG, merch) (0035) 3167 71902

Sub-City Comics, Unit 10, Level 1, Corbettcourt Centre, Eyre Square, Galway. (imp, back, gn, tpbk, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, prl, RPG, CCG, merch) (0035) 3915 65994

The 3rd Place, Crow Street, Temple Bar, Dublin 2. (imp, back, gn, tpbk, STO, s-p, ind, prl, RPG, CCG, merch) (0035) 3163 36965

Italy

Avalon, via Battisti 9/b, Bologna. Mon 3-7, Tue-Sat 10.30-1/2-7.30 (imp, back, gn, RPG, CCG, merch) (0039) 051 234459

Avalon, via Pedriali 21, Forli. Mon 3-7, Tue-Sat 10-1/2-7 (imp, back, gn, RPG, CCG, merch) (0039) 0543 33523

Avalon, via Settembrini 20, Milan. Mon 3.30-7.30, Tue-Sat 11-7.30 (imp, back, gn, RPG, CCG, merch) (0039) 022 9400410

Avalon, via Foscolo 3, Padova. Mon 3-7, Tue-Sat 10-1/2-7. (imp, back, gn, RPG, CCG, merch)(0039) 049 658290

Avalon, via Bissolati 68, Rome. Mon 3-7, Tue-Sat 10-1/2-7 (imp, back, gn, CCG, cards, merch)

Avalon, via Magenta 0, Torino. Mon 3.30-7, Tue-Sat 10.30-1, 2-7.30 (imp, back, gn, RPG, CCG, merch) (0039) 011 5617252

Forbidden Planet, via Pinerolo 11/15, 00182 Rome (imp, back, gn) (0039) 06 70305702

Il Marchio Giallo, via Deghi Scipioni 116, Rome. Tue-Sat 10.30-1/2-7.30 (imp, back, merch, kits) (0039) 06 361 40 60

La Borsa del Fumetto, via Lecco 16, 20124 Milano. (imp, back, European and RPG, CCG) (0039) 11 5617252

Malaysia

The Mind Shop, Starhill Centre, Jalang Bukit Bintag, Kuala Lumpur. Mon-Sat 11-10 (imp, CCG, RPG, merch) (00603) 241 8871

The Mind Shop, S 58 Bandar Utama, Petaling Jaya. Mon-Sat 11-10 (imp, CCG, RPG, merch) (00603) 719 8246

The Mind Shop, Jin SS21/39, Petaling Jaya. Mon-Sat 11-10 (imp, CCG, RPG, merch) (00603) 717 6602

New Zealand

Heroes For Sale, Level 2, 62 Queen St, Auckland. Mon-Sat 10-7 (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, u/g)(0064) 9 307 0682

Whitcoulls Corner Branch, 210 Queen Street, Private Bag 92098, Auckland. (imp, back, gn, tpbk, s-p, merch, ind, u/g) (0064) 9 356 5400 (fax: 9 356 5408)

Portugal

BdMania, Rua das Flores 67-71 R/C, 1200 Lisboa. Mon-Sat 11-7.30 (imp, back, CCG, merch) (00351) 21 346 1207

Interzona, Centro Comercial Brasilia, Loja 203, Rua Luis Veaga Lertao 98-120, 6050 Porto. Mon-Sat 11-11 (imp, back, gn, CCG, merch) (00351) 22 609 1460

Mundo Fantasma, Centro Comercial Brasilia, Rua Luis Veiga Leitao, 98/120, 1 Andar-Loja 203, 4050-399 Porto. Mon-Sat 11-11 (US imp, back, gn, CCG, merch) (00351) 22 609 1460

South Africa

Euroniag, Shop 79A, East Rand Mall, Boksburg, Johannesburg. Mon-Sun 9-10 (imp, back, gn, CCG, merch) (0027) 11 896 3773

Zed Bree's Comic Universe, Mediterr-anean Building, 24 Tenth Ave, Edenvale 1610 Gauteng. 9.30-6 (imp, merch, gn, CCG) 002711 453 4215 (fax 453 4459)

Spain

Gigamesh, RDA San Pedro 53, 08010 Barcelona. Mon-Sat 10-1.30/4.30-8 (imp, gn, RPG, CCG, merch) (0034) 3 246 6359

Sweden

Comics Heaven, Stora Nygatan 23, 11127 Stockholm. Mon-Sat 10-6.30 (imp, back, gn, merch)(0046) 8 202516

Switzerland

Analph Comicladen Strassburgstr, 10 PO Box 1030, 8004 Zürich. (0041) 1 2419695 fax 1 2403442

The letters **(FPI)** after entries indicate that the company is part of **Forbidden Planet International Ltd**

International Festivals

A listing of the world's major comics festivals and conventions. For further information, call the organisers on the phone, fax or e-mail numbers provided. To view updates, contact them on their websites. Organisers' estimates of their previous year's attendance is given in brackets.

January 22-25: France

ANGOULEME BD. Organisers: Festival International de la Bande Dessinee, 2 Place d l'Hotel de Ville, 16000 Angouleme, France. Tel: 0033 05 45 97 86 50 fax: 0033 05 45 95 99 28. E-mail: b.monchart@labd.com Website: www.labd.com

March 5-7: United States

MEGACON 2004, Orange County Convention Centre, Orlando, Florida. Organisers MegaCon, 4023 Tampa Road - Suite 2400, Oldsmar, Florida 34677, USA. Tel: 001 813 891 1702. E-mail: info@megaconvention.com Website: www.megaconvention.com

April: England

MEMORABILIA '04, NEC, Birmingham. Organisers: Made in Heaven, 1 Star Street, Moffat, Dumfriesshire DG10 9DR. Tel: 01683 220787 fax: 01683 220798. Website: www.memorabilia.co.uk Date: TBA

May 15-16: England

LONDON EXPO, ExCel Convention Centre, Royal Victoria Dock, London E16. Organisers:London Expo (EW), PO Box 38727, London E10 7YH. Tel: 020 8523 1074. E-mail: infohelp@londonexpo.com Website: www.londonexpo.com

May 21-23: Finland

ARCTIC COMICS FESTIVAL, KEMI. Organisers: The Arctic Comics Centre, Rautatienkatu 13 B, FIN-90100 Oulu, Finland. Tel/fax: 00358 400 514 540. E-mail: ilpo.koskela@graafinenstudio.com Website: www.kemi.fi/sarjis

May 29-30: England

Comics Festival 2004, The Empire and Commonwealth Museum and Ramada Plaza Hotel, Bristol. Organiser: Kev F. Sutherland. Website: www.sitsvac.org

May: Spain

THE 22ND BARCELONA INTERNATIONAL COMIC FESTIVAL. (2003 est: 85,000). Organisers: Ficomic, Palau, 4 Baixos, 08002 Barcelona, Spain. Tel: 0034 93 301 23 69 fax: 0034 93 301 52 26. Website: www.ficomic.com

June 10-13: Switzerland

FESTIVAL INTERNATIONAL DE LA BANDE DESSIGNEE DE SIERRE. Organisers: Festival BD Sierre, CP 200, CH-3960 Sierre, Switzerland. Tel: 0041 27 455 90 43 fax: 0041 27 455 91 01. E-mail: festival@bdsierre.ch

July 22-25: United States

COMIC-CON INTERNATIONAL '04, San Diego, California. (2003 est: 53,000). Organisers: Comic-Con International, PO Box 128458, San Diego, CA 92112-8458. Tel: 001 619 491 2475 fax: 001 619 414 1022. Website: www.comic-con.org

July: England

MEMORABILIA '04, NEC, Birmingham. (2003: 18,853). Organisers: Made in Heaven, 1 Star Street, Moffat, Dumfriesshire DG10 9DR. Tel: 01683 220787 fax: 01683 220798. Website: www.memorabilia.co.uk Date: TBA

August 13-15: United States

WIZARD WORLD CHICAGO CON 2004. (2003 est: 35,000) Organisers: Wizard World Chicago, 151 Wells Avenue, Congers, NY 10920-2064. Tel: 001 608 226 0200. Website: www.wizarduniverse.com

August: Canada

CANADIAN NATIONAL COMIC BOOK EXPO '04, Metro Toronto Convention Center, Toronto, Ontario. (2003 attendance: 15,000) E-mail: info@hobbystars.com Date: TBA

August: Scotland

MEMORABILIA '04, The SECC, Glasgow. (2003 attendance: 7,342) Organisers: Made in Heaven, 1 Star St, Moffat, Dumfriesshire DG10 9DR. Tel: 01683 220787 fax: 01683 220798. Website: www.memorabilia.co.uk Date: TBA

Comics Publishers

North America

Unlike Europe, North American publishers invariably favour indie status to that of being labelled small press. This results in there being hundreds of comics publishers.

While circulations vary immensly, the following are the continent's major comicbook producers with titles printing between 5,000 and 150,000 copies. Contact phone numbers are given where readily available.

AARDVARK-VANAHEIM, PO Box 1674 Station C, Kitchener, Ontario, Canada N2G 4R2 (Cerebus)

ABSTRACT STUDIOS, PO Box 271487, Houston, TX 77277-1487 (Strangers in Paradise)

AC COMICS, PO Box 521216, Longwood, FL 32752-1216 (adventure titles, Golden Age superhero and western reprints)

ACCLAIM COMICS, 1 Acclaim Plaza, Glen Cove, NY 11542 (game tie-in adventure, Valiant superhero imprint. dormant) (00)1 516 656 5000

AiT/PLANET LAR, 2034 47th Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94116 (graphic novels) (00)1 415 504 7516

ALTERNATIVE COMICS, 503 North West 37th Ave, Gainesville, FL 32609-2204 (alternative and graphic novels) (00)1 352 373 6336

AMERICAN MEDIA CONSUMER ENTERTAINMENT, INC, 600 East Coast Avenue, Lantana, Florida 33464 (Cracked) (00)1 561 586 1111

ANTARCTIC PRESS, 7272 Wurzbach, Suite 204, San Antonio, Texas TX 78240 (adventure and US manga)

ARCHIE COMIC PUBLICATIONS, 325 Fayette Avenue, Mamaroneck, NY 10543 (humour) (00)1 914 381 5155

AVATAR PRESS, 9 Triumph Drive, Urbana, Illinois, IL 61802 (horror fantasy titles) (00)1 217 384 2211

AWESOME ENTERTAINMENT, 9744 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 402, Beverly Hills, Los Angeles, CA 90212 (adventure titles; dormant)

BONGO ENTERTAINMENT, 1440 South Sepulveda Boulevard, 3rd Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90025 (The Simpsons and related humour titles) (00)1 310 966 6168

CALIBER COMICS, PO Box 6191, Plymouth, MI 48170 (black and white adventure titles) (00)1 734 462 0457

CARTOON BOOKS, PO Box 16973, Columbus, OH43216 (Bone and related)

CROSSGENERATION COMICS, 4023 Tampa Road, Suite 2400, Oldsmar, FL 34677 (fantasy adventure) (00)1 813 891 1702

CRUSADE FINE ARTS LTD, PO Box 845, Bayport, NY 11705 (fantasy and adventure) (00)1 631 472 2866

DARK HORSE COMICS, 10956 South East Main Street, Milwaukie, OR 97222 (adventure titles, licensed, US and Japanese manga) (00)1 503 652 8815

DC COMICS, 1700 Broadway, NY 10019 (adventure and humour, MAD, Vertigo and Paradox Press imprints) (00)1 212 636 5400

DISNEY COMICS, 500 South Buena Vista Street, Burbank, CA 91521 (humour titles) (00)1 818 507 5739

DRAWN & QUARTERLY, PO Box 48056, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H2V 4SB (black and white biog)

DREAMWAVE PRODUCTIONS, 2750 14th Avenue, Suite 302, Markham, Ontario L3R 0B6, Canada

DYNAMIC FORCES, 155 Ninth Avenue, Suite E, Runnemede, NJ 08078 (variant editions and merchandise) (00)1 856 312 1040

FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS, 7563 Lake City Way North East, Seattle, Washington 98115 (adventure, biographical and Eros adult) (00)1 206 524 1967

HARRIS COMICS, 1115 Broadway, 8th Floor, NY 10010 (Vampirella, fantasy and horror) (00)1 212 807 7100

HARVEY COMICS ENTERTAINMENTS, 100 Wilshire Boulevard, Santa Monica, CA 91401 (humour) (00)1 310 451 3377

HEAVY METAL, 100 Merrick Road, Suite 400 East, The Rockville Center, NY 11570 (adult fantasy magazines and spin-off editions) (00)1 516 594 2130

HUMANOIDS PUBLISHING, PO Box 931658, Hollywood, California CA 90093 (US-European editions) (00)1 714 2880200

IMAGE COMICS, 1440 North Harbor Boulevard, Suite 305, Fullerton, CA 92835 (adventure) (00)1 714 2880200

MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP, 10th Floor, East 40th Street, New York, NY 10016 (adventure, humour and licensed) (00)1 212 696 0808

NBM PUBLICATIONS, 185 Madison Avenue, Suite 1504, NY 10016 (adult fantasy graphic novels and magazines)

ONI PRESS, 6336 South East Milwaukie Avenue, PMB 30, Portland, OR 97202 (adventure) (00)1 503 233 1377

RADIO COMIX, 11765 West Avenue, PMB 117, San Antonio, TX 78216 (anthropomorphic manga) (00)1 210 348 7195

SIRIUS ENTERTAINMENT, INC, PO Box 128, Stanhope, NJ 07874 (adult)

SLAVE LABOR GRAPHICS PUBLISHING, 848 The Almeda, San Jose, CA 95126 (black and white fantasy) (00)1 408 279 0451

TOP COW, 10390 Santa Monica Boulevard #110, Los Angeles, CA 90025 (adventure and licensed)

TOP SHELF PRODUCTIONS, PO Box 1282, Marietta, GA 30061-1282 (alternative and biographical) (00)1 770 425 0551

TWOMORROWS PUBLISHING, 1812 Park Drive, Raleigh, North Carolina, NC 27605 (comics feature magazines) (00)1 919 833 8092

VEROTIK PRESS, PO Box 64859, Los Angeles, CA 07043 (adult fantasies)

VIZ COMICS, PO Box 77010, San Francisco, CA 94107 (English translated manga)

WaRP GRAPHICS, 43 Haight Avenue, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601 (Elfquest and spin-offs) (00)1 914 473 9277

WILDSTORM, 7910 Ivanhoe Street, #438 La Jolla, CA 92037 (includes ABC, Cliffhanger and Homage DC subsidiary imprints)

United Kingdom

The following are major UK newsstand comics and graphic novel publishers. If calling from outside of the UK, you should drop the first 0 and replace with: 01144 (USA); 0044 (mainland Europe and Eire); 001144 (Australasia).

DC THOMSON, Albert Square, Dundee DD1 9QJ (humour and adventure comics, pocket books and annuals)

EGMONT MAGAZINES LTD, 25-31 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9SU (humour, licensed and pre-school titles) 020 7344 6400

HAMLYN BOOKS, 2-4 Heron Quays, London E14 4JB (2000 AD graphic novels) 020 7531 8584

I FEEL GOOD LTD, 9 Dollington Street, London EC1V 0BQ (Viz) 020 7687 7000

JOHN BROWN PUBLISHING, The Boathouse, Crabtree Lane, Fulham, London SW6 (albums) 020 7381 6007

KNOCKABOUT COMICS, 10 Acklam Road, London W10 5QZ (humour and underground comix, graphic novels) 020 8969 2945

PANINI COMICS (UK), Panini House, Coach and Horses Passage, The Pantiles, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TM2 5UJ (humour and adventure titles, Marvel licensed) 01892 500 100

REBELLION DEVELOPMENTS LTD, The Studio, Brewer Street, Oxford OX11QN (Judge Dredd Megazine and 2000 AD) 01865 792201

THE REDAN COMPANY, Canon Court East, Abbey Lawn, Shrewsbury SY2 5DE (pre-school humour and licenced titles) 01743 364433

SAVOY BOOKS, 446 Wilmslow Road, Withington, Manchester M20 3BW (adult comic magazines, books and graphic novels) 0161 833 2664

TITAN ENTERTAINMENT GROUP LTD, Titan House, 144 Southwark Street, London SE1 0UP (licensed graphic novels, books, magazines and comics) 020 7620 0200

France

The following are the country's major comics and album publishers. If phoning from the USA, the country code of 0033 becomes 011 33

ALBIN MICHEL, 22 rue Huyghens, 75014 Paris (albums) (0033) 1 42 79 10 00

CASTERMAN, 66 rue Bonaparte, 75006, Paris (albums and manga) (0033) 1 40 51 28 00

DARGAUD, 6 rue Gager Gabillot, 75015 Paris (albums and manga) (0033) 1 40 45 35 39

DELCOURT, 5 passage du Mont-Cenis, 75018 Paris (albums and comics) (0033) 1 53 41 86 10

FLUIDE GLACIAL, 33 avenue du Main, BP 187, 75755 Paris (comics and albums) (0033) 1 43 20 23 96

GLENAT, 31 rue Ernest Renan, 92130 Issy les Moulineaux (albums and manga) (0033) 1 41 46 11 11

J'AI LU, 84 rue de Grenelle, 75007 Paris (licenced Japanese manga) (0033) 1 44 39 34 70

LES HUMANOIDES ASSOCIES, 24 avenue Philippe Auguste, 75011 Paris (albums) (0033) 1 44 93 88 33

MARVEL, BP 62, 06702 St Laurent Duvar (0033) 1 92 12 57 57

SEMIC FRANCE, 45 rue Broca, 75005 Paris (licenced comics and albums) (0033) 1 43 36 32 00

Italy

The following are the country's major comics and album publishers. If phoning from the USA, the country code of 0039 becomes 011 39

SERGIO BONELLI EDITORE, via Buonarroti 38, 20145 Milano (black and white comics) (0039) 02 96480403

MARVEL ITALIA, viale Emilio Po' 380, 41100 Modena (Marvel licensed titles)

CULT COMICS, viale Emilio Po' 380, 41100 Modena (Image and Dark Horse licensed)

MAGIC PRESS, Zona industriale via Ragusa 18, 00040 Pavona, Roma (Vertigo and WildStorm licensed) fax: (0039) 06 93020361

STAR COMICS, strada Selvette 1bis/1 Bosco (PG) (comics and black and white manga)

ASTORINA S.R.I., via Boccaccio 32, 20123 Milano (Diabolik original and reprint black and white)

KING COMICS, via Pinerolo 3, 00182 Roma (comics)

Spain

The following are the country's comics and album publishers. If phoning from the USA, the country code of 0034 becomes 011 34

NORMA EDITORAL, Fluvià 89, 08019 Barcelona (licensed DC and Dark Horse comics and albums) 0034 93 303 68 20

EDITORIAL PLANETA-DE AGOSTINI, SA, Aribau 185, 08021 Barcelona (licensed Dark Horse comics and albums)

TOUTAIN EDITOR, SA, Diagonal 325, E-08009 Barcelona (licensed Marvel, Dark Horse, Chaos!, Image and manga comics and albums) 0034 93 344 06 00

EDICIONES LA CÚPULA, Plaza de las Beatas 3, E-08003 Barcelona (adult comics and albums) 0034 32 682 8 05

Mail Order Specialists

Key to abbreviations used:

w/s	= wholesale available	CoBRA	= Comic Book Retailers' mail order protection scheme
dis	= bulk discount terms		
cat	= phone/write for catalogue	cc	= major credit cards accepted
s-cat	= sae for catalogue		
wants	= wants lists accepted	sae	= send stamped, addressed envelope with enquiry
s-wants	= sae with wants lists		

When telephoning from outside the UK, drop the first 0 and replace with: 01144 (USA); 0044 (mainland Europe & Eire); 001144 (Australasia).

Golden Age

Generally acknowledged as being published between 1938 and 1945, the first age of superhero comics, but herein designated to cover all pre-Silver Age American comics.

Comic Biz, PO Box 7041, London N12 9NF (wants, CoBRA, cc, cat) 020 8446 3464

Comic Book Postal Auctions Ltd, 40-42 Osnaburgh Street, London NW1 3ND (cat) 020 7424 0007

Mighty World of Comicana, 237 Shaftesbury Avenue, London WC2 (dis, cat, CoBRA, cc) 020 7836 5630

Quality Comics, 345 Ditchling Rd, Brighton BN1 6JJ (CoBRA, cc)

Silver Acre Comics, PO Box 114, Chester CH4 8WQ (s-wants, cc) 01244 680 048 (fax: 680686)

Silver Age

Accepted as starting in 1955 with DC's superhero rebirth through ***Detective Comics*** *#225 (intro-ducing the Martian Manhunter) and* ***Showcase*** *#4 (introducing the Barry Allen Flash). Herein covering titles up to late 1960s.*

Comic Biz, PO Box 7041, London N12 9NF (wants, CoBRA, cc, cat) 020 8446 3464

Comic Book Postal Auctions Ltd, 40-42 Osnaburgh Street, London NW1 3ND (cat) 020 7424 0007

East Coast Comics UK, 28 Acton Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk NR33 7LG (high grade, s-want, cc, sae) 01502 578385 (day) 560727 (eve)

Mighty World of Comicana, 237 Shaftesbury Avenue, London WC2 (dis, cat, CoBRA, cc) 020 7836 5630

Quality Comics, 345 Ditchling Rd, Brighton BN1 6JJ (CoBRA, cc)

Quicksilver Comics, PO Box 73, Ossett WF5 0YQ (s-cat, dis, wants, cc, CoBRA) 01924 270500 (fax: 270919)

Silver Acre Comics, PO Box 114, Chester CH4 8WQ (s-wants, cc) 01244 680 048 (fax 680686)

Post-Silver Age

Comics from 1970 to date: From Bronze Age-Marvel Age-Lead Age up to Platinum Age-Gimmick Age-Image Age. Historians will doubtless eventually decide on a name.

Mighty World of Comicana, 237 Shaftesbury Avenue, London WC2 (dis, cat, CoBRA, cc) 020 7836 5630

Planet Warehouse (FPI) *formerly Comics Warehouse* PO Box 600, 8 Galliford Road, Maldon, Essex CM9 7XD (w/s, cat, cc, CoBRA) 01621 877244

Quality Comics, 345 Ditchling Rd, Brighton BN1 6JJ (CoBRA, cc)

Tarpaulin Books and Comics, 5 Oak Close, Thetford, Norfolk IP24 3EZ (wants, s-cat) 01842 820139

Hot Comics

Current or key titles, first issues or first appearances of major characters. Investment titles for speculators willing to gamble.

A Place in Space, 101 Church Street, Croydon, Surrey CR0 1RN (wants, cc, dis) 020 8686 2400

Comix-shop. co.uk, 7a High Street, Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 1JN (wants, cat, cc) 01628 777998

Advance Imports

US comics are not generally available in UK newsagents, except for some sea-freight shipped low-cover price DCs and Marvels, and can only be found through specialists in the rest of the world. The following companies offer air-shipped copies from all of the major US publishers.

Ace Comics, 63/64 High Street, Colchester, Essex (wants, cat, CoBRA, cc) 01206 561912

Avalon Comics, 143 Lavender Hill, London SW11 5QJ (cc, CoBRA) 020 7924 3609

Comix-shop.co.uk, 7a High Street, Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 1JN (wants, cat, cc) 01628 777998

86th Floor Comics & Cards, 6 Shipley Common Lane, Ilkeston, Derbyshire DE7 8TR (dis, cat, cc) 0115 9443009

Forbidden Planet, 71 New Oxford Street, London WC1A 1DG (s-cat cc) 020 7497 2150

Gosh! Strips by Mail, 39 Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3PH 020 7636 1011

Planet Warehouse (FPI) *formerly Comics Warehouse,* PO Box 600, 8 Galliford Road, Maldon, Essex CM9 7XD (w/s, cat, cc, CoBRA) 01621 877244

Red Hot Comics, The Warehouse Block D Unit 8, Glenwood Business Park, Glenwood Place, Glasgow G45 9UH (CoBRA, w/s, dis, wants, cc) tel/fax: 0141 630 0049

Limited Editions

Many high-profile miniseries and one-shots are also available in limited, numbered and often autographed editions (s&n). New titles, to acquire copyright, can also appear in small print-run "ashcan" editions (ash).

Comic Biz, PO Box 7041, London N12 9NF (CoBRA, cc, ash, s&n, cat) 020 8446 3464

Trading Cards

Several mail order dealers carry a range of non-sports cards and related peripherals (files, folders, sleeves).

Beyond Comics, 76 Harlescott Road, Nunhead, London SE15 3BZ (s-cat, s-wants, sae, CoBRA) tel/fax: 020 7564 4213

John McDonald: Non-Sport Trading Cards, 20 Alder Grove, Coatbridge, Lanarkshire ML5 3PT (cat, wants) tel/fax: 01236 433358

Old British Titles

The popularity of old British comics continues to increase as more dealers expand into this area. The following specialise in such titles.

The Book Palace, Jubilee House, Bedwardine Road, Crystal Palace, London SE19 3AP 020 8768 0022

Comic Biz, PO Box 7041, London N12 9NF (wants, CoBRA, cc, cat) 020 8446 3464

Comic Book Postal Auctions Ltd, 40-42 Osnaburgh Street, London NW1 3ND (cat) 020 7424 0007

Weird Fantasy, 19 Decoy Road, Ormesby, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk NR29 3LG (s-cat, s-wants, annuals specialist)

Merchandise

Comics, film and TV-related t-shirts, posters, video games, badges, toys, action figures, etc.

Off World: The Sci-Fi Store, 142 Market Halls, Arndale Centre, Luton, Beds LU1 2TP. (specialists in Star Trek, Star Wars and sci-fi collectables) 01582 736256

Sci-Fi Merchandise Direct (FPI) and **Gear for Games (FPI)** Maldon, Essex CM9 4XD (cat) 01621 877222

Original Art

With artists having their originals returned by publishers, an increasing number of pages are now being made available for collectors.

The Book Palace, Jubilee House, Bedwardine Road, Crystal Palace, London SE19 3AP 020 8768 0022

Comic Book Postal Auctions Ltd, 40-42 Osnaburgh Street, London NW1 3ND (cat) 020 7424 0007

Silver Acre Comics, PO Box 114, Chester CH4 8WQ (s-wants, cc) 01244 680 048 (fax: 680686)

Peripherals

Acid-free protection for comics. Backing boards, protective bags, storage boxes, etc.

The Book Palace, Jubilee House, Bedwardine Road, Crystal Palace, London SE19 3AP 020 8768 0022

Just Comics, 65 Station Road, Warboys, Huntingdon, Cambs PE28 2TH (w/s only, CollectorLine™ distributor) 01487 824895 01487 824896

Planet Warehouse (FPI) *formerly Comics Warehouse,* PO Box 600, 8 Galliford Road, Maldon, Essex CM9 7XD (w/s, cat, cc, CoBRA) 01621 877244

General Fantasy

As well as comics old and new, some suppliers also provide catalogues of multi-media fantasy, covering TV, film, trading cards and toys.

Forbidden Planet Mail Order, 144 Southwark Street, London SE1 0UP (cat) 020 7803 1900 (fax: 7803 1901)

Sci-Fi Merchandise Direct (FPI) and **Gear for Games (FPI)** Maldon, Essex CM9 4XD (cat) 01621 877222

Manga Titles

English language translations of Japanese comics and US titles drawn in the Japanese style.

United Publications, 85 Croydon Road, Keston, Kent BR2 8HU (ind, back, cat, wants, cc) 020 8325 9507

Alternative & Biographical

The following carry an extensive range of biographical and slice-of-life comicbooks and graphic novels (Fantagraphics, Maus, Crumb, Pekar...)

Gosh! Strips by Mail, 39 Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3PH (wants) 020 7636 1011

Knockabout Comics, 10 Acklam Road, London W10 5QZ (w/s, s-cat, cc) 020 8969 2945 (fax: 8968 7614)

Page 45, 9 Market Street, Nottingham NG1 6HY 0115 9508045

Comics Auctions

Accepting lots from the general public, comics auctions provide an alternative way for collectors to sell their valuable comics. The following accept items for sale, as well as providing regular catalogues for mail order bids.

Comic Book Postal Auctions Ltd, 40-42 Osnaburgh Street, London NW1 3ND (cat) 020 7424 0007

Distributors

Anybody considering opening a comics shop or becoming a mail order dealer can obtain further information about the supply of titles from the following who bulk air import US and European comics and related items on a weekly basis.

The Book Palace, Jubilee House, Bedwardine Road, Crystal Palace, London SE19 3AP (graphic novels, art books, comics, remainders, film and TV, popular culture) 020 8768 0022

Diamond Comic Distributors, 2nd Floor, Warton House, 150 High Street, London E15 2NP (US and European comics, cards and related items) 020 8536 5730 (fax: 8536 5736)

Red Route Distribution, Unit 24, 10 Acklam Road, London W10 5QZ (US & European comics/ graphic novels, back-list specialists) 020 8960 5855

Turnaround Publisher Services, Unit 3, Olympia Trading Estate, Coburg Road, Wood Green, London N22 6TZ (graphic novels, art books, film and TV, popular culture) 020 8829 3000

Mail Order Dealers:

CI's Mail Order Index is the industry's most cost-effective and highly-targeted way to reach a huge dedicated audience in excess of 40,000 readers every month. It costs only £4 ($6 US) per entry per issue to appear and is bookable in advance as a 6-issue series. Send pre-payment of £24/$36 (plus £4.20 VAT for UK advertisers) per category with your details to:

Comics International, 345 Ditchling Road, Brighton BN1 6JJ

Cheques and international money orders should be made payable to Comics International. Alternatively, payment can be made by credit card, fax: 0(11 44) 1273 566 333 or e-mail: comicsinternational@yahoo.co.uk

The letters **(FPI)** after entries indicates that the company is part of **Forbidden Planet International Ltd**

Classified

Advertising terms and conditions

Whether for publication or not, all advertisements must be accompanied by full name, home address and daytime phone number of advertiser.

• All private classified Wants or Announcements ads (comics or card related items only) are free of charge. Maximum 50 words, they will be printed at the publisher's discretion when space permits. *(Only one advertisement can be submitted per letter/per issue so everybody gets a chance to fit in!)*

• FOR SALE ads (and dealer wants/announcements) are charged:
(i) General announcements: Stating no issue numbers, prices or titles. Per 50 words (or part thereof) ..... £5.00 ($7.50 US)
(ii) List ads: (including specific titles, issues and/or prices. Minimum charge, per 100 words (or part thereof) ..... £10.00 ($15.00 US)

Payment (to Comics International) must accompany advertising copy.

CI Classified, 345 Ditchling Road, Brighton BN1 6JJ

For Sale

Over 20,000 American and British comics for sale: Early to late issues covering every title. American titles include **X-Men**, **Spider-Man**, **Daredevil**, **Superman**, **Batman**, **Detective**, **Avengers**, etc. British titles include **Blake's Seven**, **Dr Who**, **Conan**, **Alien**, **Mad**, **X-Files**, **Red Dwarf**, **Carnage**, **Star Wars**, **Terminator**, etc. Also, **Classics Illustrated**, tabloid editions, digests, **Marvel Masterworks**, signed editions, horror magazines, sci-fi, annuals, trading card sets, videos, pogs, Tin Tin books and much more! No lists, so write or phone with wants. John Clark, 35 Denny Avenue, Waltham Abbey, Essex EN9 1NT. Tel: 01992 716961 or 07941 572672.

Collection of comics for sale: thousands of titles at giveaway prices, featuring Marvel, DC and indie comics from the 1960s to the present. For your full list, send an sae to D. Morrall, 66 Pen-y-graig Road, Townhill, Swansea SA1 6JY.

Get in first: Next March, Quality Communications will be publishing Dez Skinn's 288-page full colour hardback **Comix: The Underground Revolution** with contributions by Hunt Emerson, Denis Kitchen, Trina Robbins and a host more. Order now for a special pre-publication signed edition. Only £25 (including p&p) from: Quality, 345 Ditchling Road, Brighton, East Sussex BN1 6JJ.

Wanted

Advertisers are reminded that Wanted ads must be no longer than 50 words (including address), and only single insertion private advertisements can be published free of charge.

Wanted: **Superman**, **Superboy** and **Batman** British annuals from the 1950s and 1960s; **Jack and Jill: All Colour Giftbook** (1953); **T.V. Comic** weeklies and specials from the 1960s and 1970s; **Archie**: 80-Page Giants only. Gold Key: Supercar, Fireball, XL5, H.R. Pufnstuf and Banana Splits; US detective and horror pulps; UK Boardman, Badger and Scion paperbacks. Write to John Balfour, Westerstraat 67-3, Amsterdam, Holland, 1015 LW.

Wanted: **Kadath** (magazine) fall 1984 – Heroic Fantasy issue, **Gothics** (art folio) by Lee Brown Coye 1967 from New Albion Books. Also **Issues of Whispers** (1970s to 1990s small press Weird Fantasy magazine). Please state which issues. Contact Roger Newson, 32 Rosemary Avenue, Felixstowe, Suffolk IP11 9HX. Tel: 01394 277603 after 6pm.

Wanted: **Faust** 11, **Deep Red** 6 (Chas Balun), **From Hell** (limited S&N hardcover), and any documentaries or articles on Ed Kemper or Jerrey Dahmer. Top prices paid! Contact C. Downs, 9 Albemarle Street, Boulevard, Anlaby Road, Hull HU3 3JN. Or text 07961 008997 any time.

Announcements

Fanzine and small press titles must not be offered for sale before being printed. To verify publication, a sample copy must be sent in along with the advertising copy (50 words max). Single bookings only, so everybody gets a chance!

Bionic Benny issue 2... again! Bionic Comcis continues its policy of retreading old ground! Follow the conclusion of Bionic Benny's first epic adventure. Send two first class stamps to 94 Tippett Rise, Reading RG2 0DZ. And don't forget – **Bionic Benny** issue 1 is still available for the same great price!

Sgt Mike Battle: The Greatest American Hero! 4. Relive the adventure from 1987 when Sgt Mike Battle led Battle Force against the terrorist organisation Panda! Only £1 (plus p&p) for 40 pages of black and white fun from Graham Pearce, c/o 42 Talbot Road, Preston PR1 9QX. Visit www.sgtmikebattle.com

In Dublin City (a story in rhyme told in pictures by Gerry Hunt). Issues 1 and 2 of this professionally printed, 36-page, A4, colour card-covered title now available. "Astounding" – Dez Skinn. £5 the pair with all proceeds donated to The Simon Community. Order from Robert Curley, Atomic Diner, 51 Tyrconnell Park, Inchicore, Dublin 8, Ireland.

From the Tomb 11 presents an Al Feldstein cover, his horror work and early humour books. Enter those Houses of Horror from the 1950s comics, Morbius in Vampire Tales, The Spectre, and the UK editions of Black Magic analysed and indexed. £3.95 from Soaring Penguin, 2 Hambledon Road, London SW18 5UB.

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Black Boar Press Sketchbook #1, limited to 80 signed and numbered copies. Sketches, and rarely seen art by David Hitchcock, featuring **Springheeled Jack**, **Whitechapel Freak**, **Spirit of the Highwayman** and more. A5, 30+ pages. £3.50 (including postage & packing) cheques to D. Hitchcock, Gunhills Farm, Gunhills Lane, Windley, Derbyshire DE56 2LR.

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Have you seen **Varicose Brain**? Well, Linda Lusardi, Sebastian Loeb, Frank Quitely and Dale Winton haven't heard of it either! Don't be like all of those losers. Buy **Varicose Brain**. Adult humour but not a masturbatory aid. Only £2. Please send payment to Michelle Corcoran, 32 Hornel Road, Kirkcudbright, Scotland DG6 4LH.

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At last, the long-delayed **Cosmos Inc** 3 is here! Lesbian mercenary nuns and killer androids abound, so buy it! Also, **Comics Retrospective** 4 is now available, an issue-by-issue look at the All-Star Squadron. Both are $1.20 from Tony Ingram, 3 Lower Harlings, Shotley Gate, Ipswich, Suffolk IP9 1QE.

Twelve years ago a group of frustrated Dan Dare enthusiasts brought together members of Frank Hampson's team to recreate the original just as it had been. Their end product is now available in the new thrice-yearly all-colour A4 magazine **Spaceship Away**. Issue one is on sale in all good specialist outlets, or by post at £7.80 from Rod Barzilay, 8 Marley Close, Preston, Weymouth, Dorset DT3 6DH. Tel: 01305 832617.

The Lord of the Rings, a 40-page critical appreciation of Tolkien's masterpiece, written by Mike Cruden, with full-page illustrations by Tony Schofield. £1 including p&p from Mike Cruden, 18 Backbower Lane, Hyde, Cheshire SK14 5NS.

Bad Tommy Tooth Head, as seen in **CI** #165 *Panel Beaters*, is available now. 50p a copy from David Miles Golding, 120 Queen Elizabeth Drive, Normanton, West Yorkshire WF6 1LR. Or e-mail: dave@ amberland.freeserve.co.uk

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Join The Eagle Society, dedicated to the memory of Britain's National Strip Cartoon Weekly – The Eagle 1950-1969. For just £18 per year (cheques should be made payable to The Eagle Society) members receive our quarterly journal **Eagle Times**, as well as the chance to attend social gatherings and meet original Eagle contributors. Write to the membership secretary: Keith Howard, 25a Station Road, Harrow, Middlesex HA1 2UA. Or e-mail: rsheaf@npg.org.uk

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FUTURE DATES: 4TH APRIL, 4TH JULY 2004

CARD MART

2004 SUNDAY MARCH 11

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THE NATION'S TOP TRADING CARD EVENT

FUTURE DATE: 11TH JULY 2004

Dealers: for table availability phone 020 747 66 873

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Events

A summary of all the events advertised this issue

January 2004

31/1 **Glasgow:** Scottish Comics, Card & Collectables Fair, James Moir Hall (Mitchell Theatre) Granville Street ..... (p52)
31/1 **Leeds:** Comic Mart & Card Show, Leeds Metropolitan University, Brunswick Hall, Merrion Way, Leeds ..... (p56)

February

1/2 **London:** The National Comicbook Marketplace and Card Mart, The Royal National Hotel, Bedford Way ..... (p66)
7/2 **London:** The London ABCD Show, The Royal National Hotel, Bedford Way, London ..... (p23)
7/2 **Newcastle:** Comic Mart & Card Show, University of Northumbria, Students' Union Ballroom, Sandyford Road ..... (p56)
14/2 **Nottingham:** Comic Mart & Card Show, Victoria Leisure Centre, Gedling Street, Nottingham ..... (p56)
21/2 **Sheffield:** Comic Mart & Card Show, Main Hall, Sheffield Hallam University, Howard Street ..... (p56)
28/2 **Birmingham:** Comic Mart & Card Show, The Clarendon Suites, Hagley Road, Birmingham ..... (p56)

March

4/3 **London:** Comicbook Marketplace, Camden Centre, Bidborough Street [NOTE: not at The Royal National Hotel as previously listed] ..... (p66)
11/3 **London:** Card Mart, Camden Centre, Bidborough Street ..... (p66)
13/3 **Manchester:** Comic Mart & Card Show, Sachas Hotel, Tib Street, Piccadilly, Manchester ..... (p56)
14/3 **Liverpool:** Comic Mart & Card Show, Gladstone Hotel, Lord Nelson Street, Liverpool ..... (p56)
27/3 **Glasgow:** Scottish Comics, Card & Collectables Fair, James Moir Hall (Mitchell Theatre) Granville Street ..... (p52)
27/3 **Leeds:** Comic Mart & Card Show, Leeds Metropolitan University, Brunswick Hall, Merrion Way, Leeds ..... (p56)

April

3/4 **Newcastle:** Comic Mart & Card Show, University of Northumbria, Students' Union Ballroom, Sandyford Road ..... (p56)
4/4 **London:** Comicbook Marketplace, Camden Centre, Bidborough Street [NOTE: not at The Royal National Hotel as previously listed] ..... (p66)
10/4 **Nottingham:** Comic Mart & Card Show, Victoria Leisure Centre, Gedling Street, Nottingham ..... (p56)
17-18/4 **Birmingham:** Memorabilia '04, Birmingham NEC ..... (p26)

May

1/5 **Manchester:** Comic Mart & Card Show, Sachas Hotel, Tib Street, Piccadilly, Manchester ..... (p56)
2/5 **London:** The National Comicbook Marketplace and Card Mart, The Royal National Hotel, Bedford Way ..... (p66)
8/5 **Leeds:** Comic Mart & Card Show, Leeds Metropolitan University, Brunswick Hall, Merrion Way, Leeds ..... (p56)
16/5 **London:** The London ABCD Show, The Royal National Hotel, Bedford Way, London ..... (p23)
22/5 **Newcastle:** Comic Mart & Card Show, University of Northumbria, Students' Union Ballroom, Sandyford Road ..... (p56)
29/5 **Birmingham:** Comic Mart & Card Show, The Clarendon Suites, Hagley Road, Birmingham ..... (p56)

June

6/6 London: The National Comicbook Marketplace and Card Mart, The Royal National Hotel, Bedford Way ..... (p66)

July

4/7 **London:** Comicbook Marketplace, Camden Centre, Bidborough Street [NOTE: not at The Royal National Hotel as previously listed] ..... (p66)

Please note: the above listing of UK comics, trading card and related events is free to Comics International display advertisers only.

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